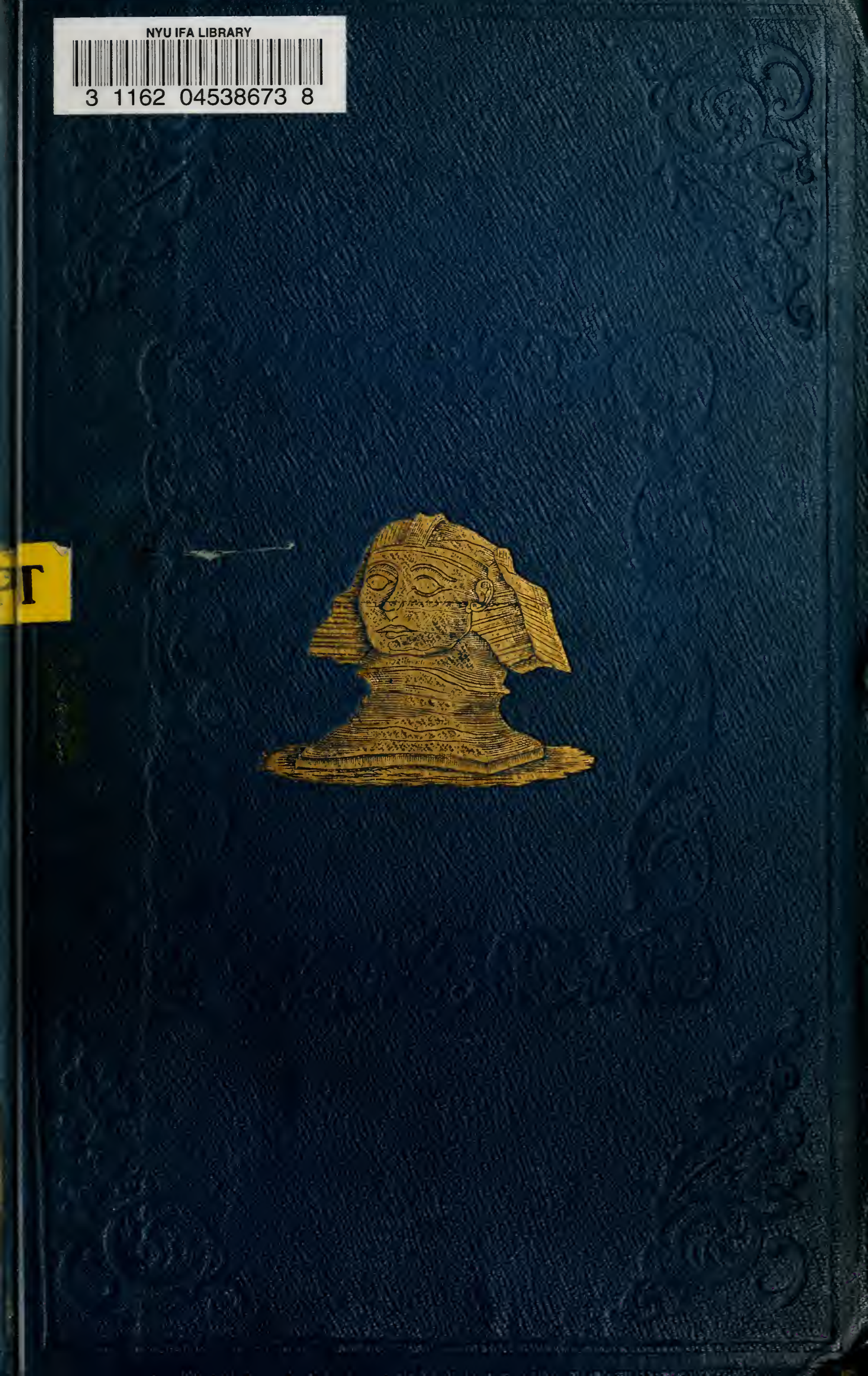

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A PILGRIMAGE

TO

THE TEMPLES AND TOMBS

OF

EGYPT, NUBIA, AND PALESTINE,

IN 1845-6.

VOL. II.

Hullmandel & Walton Lithographers

CAIRO.

Richard Bentley New Burlington Street

A PILGRIMAGE

TO

THE TEMPLES AND TOMBS

OF

EGYPT, NUBIA, AND PALESTINE,

IN 1845-6.

BY MRS. ROMER,

AUTHOR OF "THE RHONE, THE DARRO, AND THE GUADALQUIVIR,"
&c.

" Tout est tombeau chez un peuple qui n'est plus."—CHATEAUBRIAND.
" Nilus heareth strange voices."—SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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A PILGRIMAGE

TO THE

TEMPLES AND TOMBS OF EGYPT,

&c.

CHAPTER I.

DISAPPOINTMENT. — THE ENGLISHWOMAN IN EGYPT. — ZEYNAB KHANOUM. — WEDDING FESTIVITIES.— VICEROY'S DINNER.— BRIDAL PROCESSION.—AWKWARD MISTAKE.—BRIDE'S DRESS.— UNCONGENIAL MARRIAGE.— VICEROY'S DAUGHTER.— MOSLEM ETIQUETTE.—THE SULTAN AND THE LADY.—NASLI KHANOUM. —QUEEN VICTORIA'S PORTRAIT.— SHOUBRA.— TRAVELLERS' STORIES.—RHODA.—GROTTO OF THE VIRGIN.—HOLY SITES.— THE TREE OF THE VIRGIN.—TOMB OF MALEK ADHEL.— HELIOPOLIS.—OBELISK.

Cairo, Jan. 21, 1846.

A DISAPPOINTMENT awaited me on my return here a week ago. I found that the great event, so long talked of, and which I had been led to believe would not take place yet awhile, was over; for that, in the latter end of December, Zeynab Khanoum, the Viceroy's daughter, was married

In the first place, you must know that Zeynab Khanoum is the youngest daughter of Mohammed Ali, and almost the youngest of his children, being under twenty; and that Kiamil Pasha is a Circassian by birth, about thirty-six years of age, and owes his advancement in life, and all his prosperity, to the Viceroy, whose *protegé* and especial favourite he has long been. To crown his favour by raising him to the rank of his son-in-law, has been the darling project of Mohammed Ali for some time; but it would appear that the young Princess did not participate in her father's wishes to that effect. Some say that an earlier project of marrying her to her cousin, Ismael Bey, which was abandoned on account of the precarious state of his health, had taken possession of her mind; others, that the personal appearance of Kiamil Pasha was displeasing to her (and, truth to say, his long, grave, sallow face, marked with the small-pox is but ill-calculated to flatter the eye or dazzle the imagination of a young girl who feels that she has a right to be difficult). Be that as it may, when the affair had proceeded to its last stage, and when the preparations had actually commenced for the festivals preliminary to the wedding-day, Zeynab Khanoum's courage abandoned

her; she shrank back from the unwished for event, and, throwing herself at her father's feet, implored him not to insist upon her union with Kiamil Pasha. Mohammed Ali told her that matters had gone too far for such a course to be pursued—that she must marry Kiamil, but that if, at the end of eight days after the marriage, her aversion for her husband continued, she should then be at liberty to divorce him; or he (the Viceroy) would send him on a mission to Constantinople, which would be tantamount to a perpetual banishment from Cairo. So the affair proceeded; and those who were present at the reception in the hareem on the Night of the Henna,* assured me that never did bride look so broken-hearted as the poor little Princess under the mass of diamonds that weighed her down, and the flood of congratulations that poured in upon her from all sides.

The week's entertainments commenced by a grand dinner, given by the Viceroy to the Sheik-ul-Islam, the Ulemas, and all the heads of the Mohammedan religion in Cairo. With the exception of no wine being placed upon the

* *Laylet-el-Hhenna*, the night preceding the day on which the bride is conveyed to her husband's house, when her hands are stained with Henna for that occasion.

table (but there was plenty on the buffet) this repast was served completely in the European style; and the reverend guests who, for the first time in their lives, found themselves perched upon chairs at dinner, with their legs dangling under a high table, and their hands furnished with knives and forks, and dishes handed round to them by *maitres d'hotel*, out of which they were expected to help themselves with spoons instead of their fingers, looked sorely mystified, and acquitted themselves very awkwardly with these unwonted adjuncts to the science of the table, putting their own tongues and their neighbour's eyes into manifest jeopardy in their attempts to handle them properly. However, this was not the only trial that their philosophy had to encounter. No sooner was dinner over than the Viceroy arose, and, desiring his guests to follow him, led the way into a large and brilliantly illuminated hall of the palace, which had been fitted up as a theatre, with stage decorations, orchestra, boxes, &c. There all the European society invited by his Highness had already assembled, the boxes were filled with Frank ladies full dressed, and the orchestra only awaited the coming of Mohammed Ali to commence the overture. The Viceroy took possession of his

box, and desired the holy men to seat themselves behind him; and they, not daring to disobey him, yet finding that they had fallen into a snare, (for theatrical exhibitions are looked upon as an abomination by Mahometan churchmen) silently sunk into their places. But what became of them when the curtain rose, and a broad Italian farce commenced, seasoned with the practical jokes of Arlechino, Pantalone, and *tutti quanti!* If, scandalized by the feats of Columbina and her lover, they averted their eyes from the stage to the boxes, their glances fell upon infidel women decked in jewels, with naked arms and bosoms, and, worse still, unveiled faces! This was illustrating "from Scylla to Charybdis" with a vengeance! At last they sought refuge from such unseemly sights by downcast looks, and sat like martyrs, stroking their beards, ejaculating Mashallah! and wondering when such *shaitanlik* (devilry) would cease; while Mohammed Ali, with a cunning smile lurking in his keen eyes, evidently enjoyed the discomfiture evinced by the reverend heads of the Moslem religion, at this desperate stride made by him towards European customs. This method of entrapping or surprising people into that which, were their tastes and feelings consulted, they would be sure

to refuse, is a distinctive trait in his Highness's character; but the measure, in the instance in question, was a bold one, and not calculated to increase his popularity with the people he governs, although it may tend to add to the reputation he enjoys among Europeans of being the most enlightened Mahometan Prince that ever reigned. However, throughout the wedding festivities he appeared to be aiming at the approbation and gratification of the European world in preference to his own; all the honors of the hareem were reserved for the Frank ladies invited there; and, upon one occasion, when there were not seats enough to accommodate all who were assembled, the wives of the Sheiks were put out by his Highness's command, in order to give place to Christian strangers.

A grand dinner in the European style was given in the hareem to the Frank ladies assembled in Cairo, and more than two hundred were invited. But the most attractive part of the whole proceedings was the procession formed on the last day, (that on which the bride was transferred from her father's roof to her own palace, and which is, in point of fact, the wedding-day,) when the bridal offerings and gifts, and all the belongings of the young princess,

were carried in state to her new home, and that she herself followed to take possession of it. The splendid diamonds presented by Mohammed Ali to his daughter, amounting to the value of two hundred and forty thousand pounds sterling; the gifts of the Sultan; those of the bridegroom, consisting of every luxurious appendage to female adornment that eastern taste can devise, were arranged upon trays covered with cashmere fringed with gold, and carried through the city upon the heads of a party of military, preceded by a field officer on horseback, and escorted by a host of mounted eunuchs, bands playing, cannon firing, and, passing under the triumphal arches that had been erected for the occasion, were deposited in the palace of the Esbekieh. It appears that Kiamil Pasha's presents included a profusion of sweetmeats and bonbons of the most delicate description arranged in crystal vases, but so great was the quantity furnished (probably the bridegroom's intention was to impress his bride with a belief that matrimony abounds in sweets,) that a sufficient number of vessels had not been provided to contain them all. In the hurry of the moment, recourse was had to the apothecaries and druggists of Cairo to supply the deficiency with the glass

globes and bottles in use in their shops, but by some oversight of the persons employed in this arrangement, the paper labels were forgotten to be removed from the borrowed utensils, and a great portion of the tempting dainties figured under the nauseous designations of Rhubarb, Senna, Jalap, Sarsaparilla, &c., &c.,—it almost looked like a wicked satire upon the unhappy state of mind of the poor princess, whose aversion for her husband, had converted this season of joy into one of bitterness and loathing.

Mrs. Lieder, who in her capacity of "fifth officer of the Viceroy's household," remained in the hareem during the whole week, and presented the English ladies to the princesses, gave me a description of Zeynab Khanoum's bridal dress, which, magnificent as it was, appears to me to have been more gorgeous than elegant—more characterized by costliness than by taste, at least taste such as it is understood in Europe. The chemise was entirely composed of Brussels lace; the *shintyani* (or trowsers), and the *yellak* (or long open robe) were of the richest white silk, embroidered all over with a running pattern of vine leaves and tendrils in raised gold, and bunches of grapes of oriental pearls. The *anteree* (or short jacket) was of

scarlet velvet, lined and trimmed with the most costly sable; the slippers were one blaze of diamonds; round the waist was worn one of those exquisite scarlet cashmere shawls, woven with gold palms, which form the triumph of the Indian looms, and over it was placed the famous diamond girdle in the form of a garland of passion-flowers, to furnish suitable stones for which, the principal diamond merchants of London, Paris, and Vienna were put under requisition. The value of this girdle has been variously computed to be from forty thousand, to one hundred and forty thousand pounds; but all who have seen it agree in pronouncing it to have been a masterpiece of taste and magnificence. The remainder of the princess's ornaments were of corresponding splendour. Her head was dressed in the unbecoming fashion of Constantinople, and to the usual appendages were added a coronet of diamonds, a large spray of roses, composed entirely of large brilliants, (the wedding gift of her elder sister, Nasli Khanoum), and a most incongruous-looking yellow Ostrich feather, which evidently had no business there.

The bride's pale and woe-begone face, formed a sad contrast to all these costly trappings, nor

did she appear to possess the self-command requisite to enable her to disguise the painful preoccupation of her mind from the crowd by which she was surrounded. In fact, her feelings overflowed in the critical moment when she took possession of her new home, and Kiamil Pasha was no longer suffered to doubt of the disagreeable impression he had produced upon his young wife. From the instant when, after receiving her at the entrance of the palace, and carrying her in his arms from the carriage to the hareem, he raised her veil and beheld her face for the first time, and then, in compliance with her express desire, retired and left her alone, he has not been admitted to her presence. She has obdurately closed her doors as well as her heart against him, and thus matters rest at present.

Secret and sacred as are the affairs of the hareem in this country, enough has transpired of what is passing in the palace of the Esbekieh, to show that the conduct of Kiamil Pasha towards his refractory bride has been delicate and dignified in the extreme. His own mortification has never led him to forget what was due to the feelings of a young woman, sacrificed as Zeynab Khanoum has been to the pleasure

of her father, and he has observed a respectful sympathy for her unhappiness, and a deference for her wayward conduct towards himself, which it is supposed must eventually produce in her mind a revulsion of feeling in his favour. In the mean time, the poor man appears to be suffering deeply; he passes before my window every morning, either on horseback or in an open carriage, on his way from his unloving home to the citadel, and each day his countenance appears to deepen in gloom.

As for Mohammed Ali, disappointed and irritated by the unfortunate turn this affair has taken, and unable to induce his daughter to adopt his own favourable impressions of her husband's merits, he has quitted Cairo within the few last days, and has gone to Esneh for change of air. I much fear that he will not return here before I take my departure, and thus I shall be deprived of the pleasure of waylaying the old gentleman in his garden at Shoubra, (as had been arranged by one of his friends that I should do,) the only way in which an European lady can obtain an interview with his Highness, and to which he lends himself with great good humour.

It is in vain for Englishwomen, whatever may be their rank, to expect that Mahometan prin-

ciples, prejudices, or etiquette, (by whichever name you choose to qualify it,) will be waived in their favour. The mechanism of Mahometan society, and of Mahometan courts, does not admit of ladies, be they Christian or be they Moslem, being presented to the Sovereign; and whatever strides reform may have taken in the lands overshadowed by the Crescent, under the auspices of the Turkish Sultan and the Egyptian Viceroy, the desideratum of female presentations, or even private audiences at the court of either, is as far removed as it was in the days of the Selims and the Solymans, and of their Memlook representatives here. I was so amused by the explanation given to me the other day of a noble English lady's reception by the Sultan which was pompously announced to the world as a most important event,—a new era in the history of Turkish civilization,—that I cannot resist giving you the same peep at the *dessous des cartes* which was afforded to me. My informant was residing in Constantinople at the time when the affair took place, and derived his information from unquestionable authority, no less than that of some of the officials by whose management it was effected.

The lady in question was ambitious of being

presented to the young Sultan, and her lord was no less ambitious of gratifying her wishes. An application was made by them to the Pasha then at the head of affairs at Stamboul to give effect to their wishes, and as he had been at some former period ambassador at our court, his residence in London had enabled him to form a correct idea of the power exercised in the English world of fashion by the two individuals in question, and of the impolicy of offending persons who might one day have it in their power to retaliate upon him in their own country, should the Sultan's pleasure ever send him there again as his representative. But then he knew, too, that to propose such a thing to his sovereign as the presentation of the lady to him, was not to be thought of seriously. What did the cunning statesman do in this dilemma? Desirous of propitiating one party without offending the other, he adopted a *mezzotermine* which appeared to him most happily to reconcile the two difficulties. He presented himself to the Sultan and told him that there was an Englishwoman then in Constantinople who had some very fine jewels to sell, which she was anxious to submit to his Highness's inspection. The Shadow of God upon Earth signified his willingness to see them,

and directed that they should be sent to the palace for that purpose. This was not exactly what the adroit minister aimed at, but it was a near approach to it; he ventured to suggest that, as they were all female ornaments, it would be better that the Christian woman should put them on her person, and bring them to the palace herself; which would enable His Highness to judge of the effect they produced, and the manner in which they ought to be worn. The Sultan assented, and gave orders that the woman should be brought to the palace and stationed in one of the antechambers, and that when apprized of her being there, he would pass through it in order to take a view of her brilliant merchandize. His directions were punctually obeyed, and this is the history of the noble lady's interview with Abdul Medjid. And the reason of her having been smuggled, as it were, into the Imperial abode, and left shivering alone in chilly rooms and corridors, and finally being so coldly accosted and unceremoniously inspected by the young Sultan in his passage through the room in which she stood, is most intelligibly accounted for by the fact that he actually believed her to be *a diamond merchant!* and although she was impressed with the conviction

that the interview was conceded to her rank and station, it was only owing to that mistaken supposition, above stated, that the proud English lady obtained admission into his presence.

* * * *

As this letter is professedly a gossipping one, I must not omit some notice of Nasli Khanoum, the Viceroy's eldest daughter and favourite child, the offspring of his first and best beloved wife, for whom his attachment was so great that he never was known to refuse a request made by her, and always swore by her beautiful eyes. Nasli Khanoum is now past fifty years of age, and has never remarried since the death of her husband, the terrible Defterdar Bey, with whom (if report speaks true) she was well mated in point of disposition, possessing the same ferocious propensities, and the same indifference to human sufferings that characterized that sanguinary tyrant. But popular belief has registered even stronger charges against her than those of mere cruelty. Nasli Khanoum is said to be quite a Marguerite de Bourgogne in her way; and strange and terrible stories are whispered of a certain mysterious pavilion in her garden, which is represented as being a Tour de Nesle, from

whence the guests admitted have never been known to emerge!

"There yawns the sack, and yonder rolls the Nile."

Such is said to be the finale to the Princess's orgies,—a summary method of enforcing secrecy and discretion,—but as this is merely a surmise of the populace of Cairo, it would be unfair to contemplate it as a well-founded accusation. The vulgar of all nations are the same,—delighting in scandal, prone to exaggerate, and, above all, inclined to calumniate and misjudge the actions of their superiors; and the glib-tongued Caireens are not at all behind-hand with Christian and more civilized communities in this particular. Those persons in a more elevated rank, who are admitted to her Highness's society, pronounce her to be gifted with great natural abilities, and possessing powers of captivation which render her at times as fascinating as she can be terrible; but they admit also that she is often coarse even to cynicism in her conversation, and delights in putting her visitors to the blush by the extraordinary nature of her questions and remarks.

Nasli Khanoum's establishment is as magnificent as that of a sovereign Princess; her

diamonds and plate are more costly than those of the Viceroy, and her father's affection concedes to her many of the splendid gifts that are sent to him by the different European Powers. The beautiful silver fountain presented to Mohammed Ali by the East India Company was promised by him to his daughter before it reached Egypt; and even the gift which he prized above all others, and which flattered him more than any offering that was ever made to him,—I mean the portrait of our gracious Queen, which her Majesty lately sent to the Viceroy, is now in the custody of Nasli Khanoum. Placed upon a purple velvet cushion, it occupies a table in the centre of her state room, and is the object of Mohammed Ali's most reverential admiration, and daily visited by him. He always causes his seat to be placed opposite to it, and in such a manner that the picture is elevated above him, and after contemplating it with delight for a length of time, he invariably exclaims: "Surely she is the handsomest woman in the world!"

When the Viceroy resides in Cairo, he generally sleeps at his villa at Shoubra, and passes hours in the delicious shade of its orange bowers and trellissed avenues, only coming into town to

transact business at the palace in the citadel, during the forenoon. Nothing can be more delightful than this retreat; it is about two miles from the city, and is approached the whole way by a fine road shaded with sycamores and acacias. There is a small palace attached to it, one room of which is magnificently fitted up in the European style; but the garden is the great attraction of Shoubra, and as his Highness very liberally allows the public free admission to it, there is a constant affluence of visitors there, to whom the gardeners never fail to present bouquets and oranges, in the expectation of receiving a handsome *bachshish* in return. The garden was laid out by a Greek, in the old Italian style, and is charmingly diversified with terraces, covered walks, labyrinths, kiosks, bowers, &c. The alleys are paved with small white and black pebbles, arranged in elegant designs of mosaic work, and are kept in admirable order. But the chief object of admiration with the Caireens, is the great kiosk, where there is a noble reservoir of water, supplied from marble fountains in the form of crocodiles, and there Mohammed Ali causes his ladies to be paddled about in boats, and it is said that he often gives private directions to the boat-

men to upset the *light craft*, and surprise the fair ones with a cold bath—a piece of malice which affords him as much unqualified delight, as if he were still in his schoolboy days. A fine arcade runs all round the reservoir, open towards the water, and embellished at the other side with elegant Arabesque gratings, through which are to be seen and inhaled the odoriferous flowers and shrubs that cluster in the garden beyond. When the gas-lamps are lighted, the fountains playing, and the Viceroy and his hareem assembled there in a bright starlight evening, the kiosk of Shoubra presents a *coup d'œil* worthy of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. But no Christian has ever witnessed such an assemblage; and you must distrust the assertions of those travellers who have written of hearing the silvery laugh, and distinguishing the graceful forms of unveiled Odalisques among the orange-trees of Shoubra. All this sounds very pretty and poetical, and reads very well, but the sober matter-of-fact truth is, that whenever the Viceroy's ladies take the air in the gardens, the gates are hermetically sealed against all the world, and eunuchs are posted at the different outlets, to prevent the possibility of a straggling stranger

obtaining admission, or even getting a cursory glance of the forbidden fruit.

There is another fine garden in the vicinity of Cairo, which belongs to Ibrahim Pasha, and occupies the whole of the little island of Rhoda, the locality pointed out to travellers as being the spot where Pharoah's daughter went down to the river to bathe, and found the infant Moses among the bulrushes. This garden is under the superintendence of Mr. Trail, a Scotch horticulturist, and is rich in every variety of tropical vegetation and Indian trees, besides whatever European productions can be made to succeed in this dry and burning climate. It is laid out in the English style, and the beautiful flower-beds, and the graceful willows drooping their flexible branches over marble balustrades into the calm Nile, reminded me of the fair gardens of the West, and some of those lovely creations of my own country which have no equal in any other part of the world. No pains or expense have been spared in rendering the gardens of Rhoda as complete as possible; but when I inquired of Mr. Trail whether Ibrahim Pasha understands enough of botany or horticulture to appreciate the rare collection of plants and trees he has assembled together there, he as-

sured me that all his Highness's knowledge of that science is comprised in enjoying a fine peach when it is served at his table. The ladies of his hareem are occasionally permitted to visit the gardens, but Mr. Trail declares that he would rather see a flight of locusts alight upon the premises, than these fair recluses. They gather half the flowers, tread down the remainder, devour all the fruit within their reach, and six months are scarcely sufficient to repair the ravages effected in less than six hours by them, when they are let loose in the bowers of Rhoda.

The first time I visited Rhoda, I took advantage of its vicinity to Old Cairo, to go and see the subterranean excavation which, according to monkish tradition, served as a place of concealment for the Virgin Mary and the Infant Jesus, during the first period of their sojourn in Egypt. It is in the custody of the Copts, who have built a church over it, and is held in the highest reverence by that remnant of the people of Christian Egypt, who would sooner doubt of their own existence than doubt of that little cavity having been the actual abode of the Holy Family. It is so low, that a common-sized person would be unable to sit upright in it, and so small,

that two persons could not find shelter there. Adjacent to it, a spot is pointed out as being the place were Joseph sat and watched the Virgin Mother and her Divine charge; and a well is also shown, which supplied the fugitives with water, during their subterraneous sojourn. I hope that it does not argue a want of faith to doubt of the authenticity of these localities, but I confess that I looked upon them with a suspicious eye; for although we know that the Holy Family took refuge in Egypt, and that they must have had some sort of abode there, it is very unlikely that the presence of an obscure Jewish mechanic and his wife, and their child, whose Divine Mission had not then manifested itself by any miracle, should have been considered by the natives of such importance, that the spot inhabited by them was immediately converted into a place of note, and chronicled as such from generation to generation. It is far different with the localities in the Holy Land, identified with the history of our Saviour; all of them were consecrated by the miracles performed by Him in His life-time, and the no less miraculous events of His Passion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension, and were transmitted by the testimony of eye-witnesses, to persons in-

terested from the highest and purest motives in perpetuating an exact remembrance of them. But the Flight into Egypt cannot be compared with these; and it is therefore admissible to suppose, that in the early days of Christianity, when the Fathers of the Church sought to establish the authenticity of Gospel history by every material proof within their reach, and even by advancing more than the Evangelists themselves have done—when the holy sites of Palestine suddenly emerged from the obscurity in which they had been wrapped for centuries, and when holy relics were brought to light through the intervention of miraculous revelations, that the Cenobites of Egypt, anxious to render perfect the chain of interesting localities connected with the Christian narrative, assumed for the little grotto in question, the sacred attributes it has ever since enjoyed.

On the site of Heliopolis, where the village of Matarieh now stands, there is another memento of the Virgin, which is equally an object of reverence to the Christians of Egypt, and invested by them with the same sanctity as the grotto of Old Cairo. It is an aged Sycamore tree, under which the Holy Family are said to have reposed in their flight into Egypt; and

when, alarmed by some idea of pursuit or detection, they looked around them for some spot where they might conceal themselves, the trunk of the tree opened miraculously, and, enclosing the fugitives within its bark, shut them completely from the view of their pursuers. The Gospels say nothing of this, nor of the fountain of water which bubbled forth miraculously to quench their thirst, and in which the Holy Mother was afterwards wont to wash the linen of her blessed babe; but they are the Coptic legends of the land, and every stranger who visits the ground where Heliopolis once stood, is taken to see "the Tree of the Virgin;" and doubtless cuts, as I did, a fragment of bark from its venerable trunk. The name of the village where the Sycamore stands (Materieh), signifies "Fresh Water," and is supposed to be the ancient *Ain Shems*, or Fountain of the Sun.

The ride from Cairo to Heliopolis, the On of Scripture, is delightful; the first part is across the skirt of the Desert, where a picturesque object meets the eye in the Saracenic dome of El Adleeh, the isolated tomb of Salah-é-deen's brother, Malek Adhel,—the Moslem prince on whom Richard Cœur de Lion was desirous of bestowing the hand of his sister, Matilda of

England,—the Saracen warrior whom the beautiful but almost forgotten romance of Madame Cottin has invested with such an heroic charm. Further on, the road lies through green fields and shady avenues of acacia trees, and the whole air is redolent of the delicious perfumes of bean blossoms, and alive with the hum of wild bees. The "land of Goshen" is opening upon you, and its actual aspect bears out the ancient renown for pastoral fertility, which caused it to be conceded by Pharaoh as an abode to Jacob and his sons, when Joseph persuaded them to leave their own country, and to bring their flocks and herds with them that they might dwell near him in the Land of Egypt. I cannot describe to you the deep and reverential interest with which one treads the ground rendered sacred by its associations with Bible History; and while the imagination of the traveller is carried back to the days of the patriarchs, and fancy peoples the land with the venerable forms of Joseph's kindred, no pert innovation of modern times, in the shape of recent civilization, is visible to dispel the momentary illusion. The swarthy Arab, with turbaned head and naked limbs laboriously irrigates his fields by means of the primitive *shadoof;* the patient ox, unmuzzled, treads out the

corn; and long strings of camels and asses bear home loads of green provender, exactly in the same manner as in the days of the pastor patriarchs.

No vestige of the ancient On remains, except an obelisk sixty-five feet high, of a far less beautiful description than those of Luxor and Karnac, the sole remaining one (with the exception of Cleopatra's Needle) now to be seen in Lower Egypt. The cartouches upon its four sides show it to have been erected by Osirtasen, the Pharaoh of Joseph; and as some indications formerly existed of an avenue of sphinxes leading from it, and part of a sphinx was lately found there, most probably this solitary obelisk formed one of the pair which stood before the entrance of the celebrated Temple of the Sun at Heliopolis. Swarms of wild bees now encrust all the upper part with their nests, which they have deposited with the utmost nicety in the carvings of the ovals and hieroglyphics; and we incurred some risk of being stung by them as we approached the base of their lofty abode, for they appeared to look upon us as aggressors on the premises, and, descending in flights, wheeled about our heads and settled upon our clothes, without harming us however. The

obelisk stands in a garden full of rosemary and other fragrant herbs (but I could discover none of the balsam for which Materieh was formerly famous); and standing beneath the shadow of this lonely monument, I in vain looked around me for some other trace of the famous City of the Sun where Joseph dwelt, and where Moses became "learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians." All is now a level blank, and the words of prophecy have been illustrated to the letter in On, as in Noph and No,—the pomp of Egypt is destroyed, and she is destitute of that of which she was full!

CHAPTER II.

THE MODERN EGYPTIANS.—POPULAR SCENES.—ARABIAN ARCHITECTURE.—POLICE MAGISTRATE.—THE BOW STREET OF CAIRO.—PUNISHMENT.—PARDON.—COPT WEDDING.—COPT HAREEM.—COPT BRIDES.—A LIVING LUSTRE.—STREET PROCESSIONS.—EGYPTIAN SUPERSTITIONS.

Cairo, Jan. 25, 1846.

The more I see of the "Victorious City," the better I like it, and the more am I struck by the extraordinary accuracy of Mr. Lane's descriptions of men, manners, and things, in this most picturesque of all Oriental capitals. "The Modern Egyptians" is certainly the most perfect work of the kind that ever was written in any language; it leaves nothing untold — everything is explained— everything accounted for with a truthfulness quite delightful; and although the partiality of the gifted author for the country and the people he has described is evident, he has never been betrayed by it into any of those exaggerations which plunge travellers into the depths of disappointment, when they come to

compare squalid and sombre realities with the rose-coloured rhapsodies that have lured them, full of brilliant anticipations, far from their fire-sides. In my daily rides through the streets and bazaars of Cairo, I have endless opportunities of testing his exactitude, and in some instances it has stood me in stead of a Dragoman's explanations, and enabled me to name, comprehend, and account for many things that have met my eyes for the first time, but which had been long rendered familiar to my sense through the graphic pen of Lane.

I have said that there is constant amusement to be found in mixing among the motley, masquerading-looking multitudes that busily throng the highways and byeways of the city, and that the picturesque population offers a more genuine type of Orientalism, from the Pasha to the pauper, than is to be found elsewhere in the East. The taciturn dignity of the Turk is here happily relieved by the lively loquacity of the Arab, and as reform has not as yet shorn the stately Moslem of his flowing robes, or removed the graceful turban from his shaven brow, and left the graceless tarboosh there to supplant it in all its mean and naked formality, every group would form a study for a painter, and every street, with its

striking Arabian architecture, a beautiful background to the picture. True it is that rags and ruin predominate among the people and their habitations, but poverty appears to be deprived of half its horrors under the glowing skies of Egypt. The tumble-down houses look absolutely beautiful in the sunshine that steeps them in golden hues; and who could feel pity for the beggar who luxuriously stretches his naked limbs under the shelter of a mud-built wall, and finds there the sound and healthful slumber which the Sybarite vainly sought for beneath the silken curtains of his rose-strewn couch?

But it is in the Great Square of the Esbekieh (which may be termed the Belgrave Square of Cairo), and in the large open space before the gates of the Citadel, that the characteristic groups in which I delight are to be found; and so well does my donkey (the very pearl of asses) understand my taste, that he invariably stops of his own accord whenever he hears the tam-tam of the Darabookah preluding or accompanying the chant or story of some itinerant Arab recounting the exploits of the Memlooks, the feats of Antar, or the wonders of the Thousand and One Nights, to an eager and enthusiastic crowd, who hang almost breathless upon every

word and gesture of the recital, with which they are all familiar, but which they never weary of hearing repeated. Besides these street bards and minstrels, there are ambulatory buffoons whose representations are full of the most humorous talent, and might rival, if not outstrip, the popular exhibitions on the *tretteaux* of the Boulevard du Temple; and I have seen among them children of six and seven years old bearing their part in the "*parade*," with a comic talent, and an imperturbable sang froid, that would do honour to the Bobêche and Galimafrée of Paris in all their glory and in all their maturity. Then there are street scribes, and interpreters of dreams (even as in the days of the Pharaohs); and there are serpent-eaters, and serpent-charmers, with *living* necklaces and bracelets coiled around them; and there are jugglers with cups and balls, and jugglers who swallow knives, or pass them through their limbs and noses. And around each group circulates the water-seller with his water-skin poised high over his shoulder, and his chinking metal cups in his hand, ready to refresh the thirsty public at about half-a-farthing a draught; and the vender of sweetmeats with a tempting array of *halva* and "lumps of delight" set out upon a wooden tray borne upon his head; the

whole animated by such guttural, screaming snatches of dialogue, and such fiery gestures, as would lead the uninitiated to suppose that the Arabic language was invented solely for the purposes of brawling and scolding, and that Arab lips could not mould themselves to accents of courtesy and gentleness.

I have been revisiting all the monuments of Cairo since my return, in order that I might judge how far the light and graceful Saracenic architecture would bear comparison with the solemn and stupendous structures of ancient Egypt; and I find that all my predilections lean towards Arabian art. I may be wrong, and doubtless I am so, in preferring their delicate and perishable beauty to the marvellous durability of the creations of the Pharaohs; but I do not pretend to defend my taste, or to base it upon stronger grounds than the mere womanish fancy that dwells with more delight upon the fair and fragile rose, which lasts but a brief summer season, than upon the stern and everlasting cypress upon which revolving seasons and centuries produce no change. You may laugh at the idea of seeking for sympathy in *stones;* but I maintain that there is something sympathetic in Arabian architecture. I never behold one of their graceful

domes, fretted with gorgeous stalactites and reflecting the Iris tints of stained-glass windows upon tesselated marble pavements, that I do not feel as though I should love to dwell beneath them; whereas there is something repulsive in the monstrous magnificence of Pharaonic architecture, and I should shrink in terror from the idea of even pitching my travelling tent under the stupendous gloom of its mighty porticoes. And now on my return from the wonders of Old Egypt, my eyes turn with renewed delight to the swelling domes and elegant minarets of Cairo, with their rich tracery and triple rows of light galleries—more beautiful far than those of Constantinople—and, with all due humility, I compare myself to the incorrigible Irishman, who, when one of his friends was recalling to his recollection the splendours and pleasures of London and Paris, responded to all those glowing reminiscences and eulogies by ejaculating, "Ah then! give *me* Kilteely!"

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Yesterday the rather novel recreation was procured for me of being present at the Police or Correctional Court, in short, the Bow Street of Cairo. The sitting magistrate, Ismael Bey, an old Turkish general, received us with great dis-

tinction in his private room, having retired there for that purpose; and after the usual refreshment of pipes and coffee were discussed, and the as usual routine of the unvarying questions and answers which inevitably characterize these Oriental interviews were over, we expressed our wish to witness the proceedings under his jurisdiction, and were immediately handed into court, where I was placed upon the bench beside his cross-legged worship.

Against one of the side-walls of the hall were ranged about six or eight criminals, chained to one another by the neck like so many wild beasts. These were men whose cases had already been disposed of in the early part of the day; and the first man I saw tried (if trial it can be called, where justice is administered in so summary a manner, that two or three questions put to the accuser did the business) was added to the chain. These culprits, Mohammed informed me, were men who were charged with offences of a more serious nature than comes within the jurisdiction of this court, or at least required a higher tribunal to bring them to final judgement, and were therefore to be sent off to the superior court sitting in the citadel. Then came on the police affairs for minor offences, which I con-

ceive were carried on very much as in other countries. There was a profusion of black eyes and bloody noses and torn turbans exhibited, street brawlers with whom blows precede words, and who were severally dragged into court by the nape of the neck by the soldiers on duty there. These cases were disposed of, some by being postponed, some by admonition to the prisoners, some by their removal in custody to prison. Almost in all these cases a spy, or common informer, acted an important part; and Mohammed, who stood beside me to interpret, said: "His Excellency desires me to tell you that we think in this country a thief is the cleverest person to catch a thief." — And Ismael Bey seemed much pleased to learn from me that not only we entertain the same doctrine in England, but that it has acquired the importance of a proverb with us.

For three quarters of an hour I remained an undisturbed spectator of the proceedings; and as (being aware that in this country punishment follows quickly upon conviction) I had desired Mohammed to apprize me when any symptoms of the bastinado became evident, that I might make a timely escape,—I began to hope, from not receiving any such warning, that everything

would pass off quietly. I believe that he had imparted my injunctions to the judge, for at last upon the appearance of a poor shivering wretch who seemed to have collapsed into half his natural size from terror, I received a courteous invitation from Ismael Bey to withdraw to his private apartment, where he would soon join me; and I was accordingly conducted out of court by his janissary, the friends who accompanied me remaining to witness the proceedings, and retaining Mohammed to interpret for them. But scarcely had I settled myself on the divan, when shriek after shriek following on the sound of blows, echoed through the whole building. I sprung from my seat and made a rush to the entrance of the court, alive only to the determination of begging off the unhappy culprit, and not to the impropriety of my proceedings; but I was repulsed by the crossed bayonet of the sentinel stationed there, and forced to return to my retreat, where, with my fingers in my ears, vainly endeavouring to exclude the horrid sounds, and in a state of exasperation which quite sickened me, I paced up and down the room like a wild beast in its cage. Thank God! in less than two minutes the sounds ceased, and very shortly afterwards my friends joined me, accompanied

by the judge, who looked perfectly aghast at the state of agitation in which he found me. Ismael Bey hastened to inform me, that at the intercession of one of my friends, he had remitted the criminal's punishment at the seventh blow, and had caused him to be liberated, with an injunction, that if he ever again appeared before him in that court he should receive five hundred blows on the soles of his feet; and really the old gentleman looked so well pleased at having been persuaded into an act of clemency, and his countenance bore so benignant an air, that all my previous indignation vanished, and we parted very good friends. But before I made him my adieux, a beautiful volume was brought in by his order, engrossed in Arabic characters upon vellum, and illuminated with purple and gold, and upon the margin of one of the pages I was made to inscribe my name at Ismael Bey's request. This volume was the Turkish Code; and, as he received it back from my hands, he courteously assured me that it was, after the Koran, the book he most prized in his possession. You see that Turks can be as gallant as Christians when they choose.

In the evening we went to a Copt wedding in the Esbekieh, where a splendid *fantasia* was

being held. As the family is a very wealthy one, and that a double marriage was celebrated (that of the son and that of the daughter of the house), everything was on a scale of great magnificence and liberality. We found the interior court of the dwelling brilliantly illuminated with tier suspended over tier of large chandeliers, producing the effect of a tree of light, and literally crowded with male guests. In the midst of them were seated the famous musicians of Cairo, who are so admirably delineated in one of the wood-cuts of Mr. Lane's "Modern Egyptians," performing a concert upon all of their incongruous instruments, dulcimers, cocoa-nut fiddles, Arab flutes, &c., in a way to drive an Italian *maestro* "clear demented," and certainly not in a way to impress me with the correctness of their musical taste. Noise, and not harmony, or even melody as understood by us, appeared to be their aim; and I was very glad to escape from their vicinity, and to be conducted by the master of the house to the apartments on the first floor, where all the *élite* of the male guests were assembled (for although the Copts are Christians, their women live in as strict seclusion from the male part of the community as Mahometan females, and veil their faces as completely out of doors).

The large room into which we were ushered was covered with beautiful Persian carpets, and lighted not only by a large chandelier but by a number of wax lights of enormous dimensions contained in very tall silver candlesticks placed upon the ground. I was seated in the corner of ceremony of the divan, against a window overlooking the crowded court below, from whence I could see the proceedings of the *fantasia*, and hear the songs of the Almê,* or famous singing women, who usually attend all the wealthy weddings of the Caireens, and are paid by the contributions of the guests at a rate which our most eminent Italian artists would be glad to receive; and there *chibouques*, narghilés, coffee, sweetmeats, and sherbet were served to us.

After half an hour passed among the taciturn Copt guests, whose gloomy countenances appear to have no affinity with the lively Arabs of Egypt, and in whose downcast eyes and dark brows may be traced the stigma of a people who betrayed

* The *Almé* have been frequently confounded by travellers, and, more strange to say, by writers upon Egypt, with the *Ghawazee*, or dancing girls, a race inferior to them in all respects. The Almé (a term which signifies "a learned female,") are highly accomplished, and generally unite the gift of composition and the improvisation of verses to their musical talents.

their country to the Infidel, I was conducted by the master of the house to the entrance of the hareem, where some negress slaves in their gala dresses received me, and ushered me into the presence of the presiding lady. There she sat, enthroned among cushions, and surrounded by at least a hundred female guests, who, from the bright colours of their gold-embroidered garments, looked like a bed of tulips. The elder ladies wore Indian shawls thrown over their heads and shoulders, the young ones veils of pink, blue, or white gauze, edged with gold or silver needle-work. A quantity of diamond ornaments were displayed, but all of them badly set; and among the numerous company assembled, I did not perceive one beautiful face—scarcely a pretty one—and many disfigured by having only one eye. In my capacity of stranger I was immediately placed by the side of the hostess, and furnished with a narghilê; and a china saucer was filled with choice morsels from a large tray of confectionery and *bon-bons*, and handed to me together with some of the most delicate rose sherbet I ever tasted. After these preliminaries were over, the lady arose, and, taking me by the hand, conducted me into an adjacent chamber, where, stretched upon a sofa, lay the two young brides; one of

them fast asleep in the arms of a negress nurse, their heads and faces closely muffled in white cotton coverings, studded over with diamond ornaments, and bound on with diamond circlets. These were for a moment removed by my conductress, and the countenances of two children, apparently not more than twelve years of age, were revealed to me, attenuated with fatigue, and possessing not a single beauty. They were both dressed exactly alike in yellaks and trowsers of the richest scarlet-and-gold Aleppo satin, with white India cachemires round their waists, and splendid diamond *ckoors* upon their tarbooshes; and when the mother had pointed out to me which was her own daughter, and made me examine the rich ornaments worn by both brides, we withdrew and left the poor tired little creatures to their repose.

I was warmly pressed to remain all night in the hareem, but I retired even before supper was served, and was again obliged to pass a short time with the master of the house and his male guests on my way down stairs. A portly old Turk, who appeared to be the grand guest of the party, sat in a smaller room, apart from the rest, lighted by enormous wax candles; and with great ceremony we were introduced to him, and invited

to share his solitude. I am wrong—he was not alone—he was *tête-à-tête* with a bottle of Champagne, which was half hidden under the long fringes of the divan where he was squatted, and had drawn so largely upon the convivial resources of his sparkling companion, that he appeared to have completely fuddled himself in the encounter. He saluted me with a very pretty speech, translated by Mohammed to this effect: "The gentleman says he is very happy indeed to see you here, and that your presence lights up the whole apartment!" After a few puffs from his *chibouque*, the compliment was repeated to me exactly in the same words; and again and again, until I began to fancy myself an enormous chandelier. But on hearing it for the seventh time, I really feared that I might set the house, if not the old Aga's heart, in a blaze, and that it was high time for me to be off. Accordingly we effected our retreat at midnight, and late as was the hour, loitered in the Esbekieh on our way home, to enjoy the delicious freshness of the night air, and the solemn beauty of the star-lit skies, and the deep silence that reigned around, which appeared doubly delightful to us after the heat and glare and racket of the wedding *fantasia*.

The marriage ceremonies and festivities of the

Copts are nearly similar to those of the Moslem Egyptians, but in neither cases do high-born and wealthy brides parade the city on foot on the day of the Bath, and the day of their entrance into their husband's house. They are conveyed thither in the evening in great state, accompanied by all their female relations; and that ceremony constitutes the closing one of the week's rejoicings. The out-of-door demonstrations are confined to the middling and lower classes, and very large sums of money are expended by them on those occasions, as it is indispensable that every bride should be veiled from head to foot in a scarlet India shawl bound on round the forehead with a bandeau of diamonds.

This morning I met one of these wedding processions on a very grand scale, there being no less than two circumcision parties attached to it. The bride's diamond circlet was quite splendid, and some of the bridal women had their faces covered with a close network of seed pearls, instead of the usual white muslin face-veil, the bottom part of which was enriched with long strings of gold coins depending from thence like fringes, which produced a very costly effect. Upon my stopping to look at the two little boys who were as fine as silk and gold stuffs could make them, a handful of

salt was thrown over me by some of their attendants, to avert from them the consequences of the Evil Eye. Nowhere in the East is this superstition more rife than in Cairo; amulets and charms are worn to ward it off from the person; and over the doorways of many of the habitations an aloe plant is suspended to shield the house from the same mischievous influence. Praise and admiration are considered as unfailing mediums of communicating it, and neither are ever expressed by Egyptians, unless some pious sentence or ejaculation is added, which is supposed to neutralize the evil power.

Another superstition of the women of this country is, that if, when they are in a way to become mothers, they can gaze upon and touch some pretty infant, or even only the waxen semblance of one, their own offspring will resemble it. An English lady, who has long resided in Cairo, and who is on terms of intimacy with all the females of Mohammed Ali's family, told me that having procured from London one of those beautiful large wax dolls with blue eyes and flaxen hair, and dimpled elbows and waxen feet, which constitute the delight of English children, she took it to the Viceregal hareem, intending it as a present for some of its youthful inmates. One of the ladies

immediately seized upon the doll, held it before her with her eyes fixed upon its eyes for some time, then touched its cheeks with the points of her fingers, which she immediately applied to her own cheeks, and so on with every feature, and finally pressed the waxen baby long and lovingly upon her bosom before she would relinquish it. My friend was naturally surprised at seeing such demonstrations of tenderness lavished upon an inanimate image; but the mystery was soon cleared up by the lady informing her that she had hopes of becoming a mother, and that as she wished her child to resemble the beautiful English doll, she had taken the requisite means of insuring the likeness.

A very few days afterwards I witnessed a curious illustration of this belief in the streets of Cairo, which I should have been unable to account for had not my friend's information afforded me a key to the enigma. The overland passengers had arrived from Suez on that day, and, as is always the case, the whole city was inundated with groups of strangers mounted on donkeys, and scampering about to see the sights. As I passed before the door of the Hotel d'Orient, a bevy of nursery maids, with their infant charges, issued from thence; and one of them, an old Irish-

woman, with a lovely little baby about six months old in her arms, came and inquired of me the way to the bazaars. While she was speaking, a respectably dressed Egyptian woman stopped, evidently struck with admiration of the child's laughing blue eyes and snow-white skin; and after a momentary hesitation she stretched out her hands towards it, and pressed its little shoulders, and then her own bosom. The Irish nurse neither relishing or understanding this pantomime, was about to repulse her very roughly, when I checked her by explaining the meaning of it. The woman then proceeded to touch the infant's forehead, cheeks, bosom, &c., always stroking down her own bosom with the same hand afterwards; and at last attempted to take the child from its nurse's arms, but this was stoutly resisted by the nurse, although the good-humoured little thing itself was quite willing to go to the stranger. "Let her hold the baby for a minute or two," said I, "and I will guarantee that she does it no harm." So the precious charge was given up to her, and the Egyptian woman, clasping it fondly to her heart, walked away with it, nurse and I following until we reached Shepheard's Hotel. There I thought it was time to put an end to the scene, and I signified to the Egyptian that

she must restore the child to its rightful guardian, which she did with demonstrations of the liveliest gratitude, often turning back, however, to imprint the infant lineaments upon her memory. When I looked at her own glistening eyes, black as midnight, and her brown hands and arms, dark as those of a Lascar, I could not but smile at the futility of her expectations, and sigh for the disappointment that awaits her at the end of a few months. Happily, maternal love is blind, as love less pure and holy is said to be; and this woman will soon gaze with as much tender admiration upon her chocolate-coloured imp as though it possessed the cherub countenance of the fair English child!

CHAPTER III.

SCHOOLS OF THE CAIRO MISSION.—GIRLS' SCHOOL.—THE COPTIC INSTITUTION.—CHARITY SCHOOL.—LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.—CAIREEN BEAUTY.—EGYPTIAN COSTUME.—MAGIC.—CAIRO MAGICIAN.—FAILURE.—DETECTION.

Cairo, Jan. 30, 1846.

THE greater part of yesterday was passed by me with Mr. and Mrs. Lieder, who took me over the schools of which they have the direction, and which, indeed, owe their very existence to the pious energy of Mr. Lieder. The funds are provided by the Christian Missionary Society, under the sanction of the highest Church of England authority; and the beautiful part of the system is that Copt, Arab, and Jewish children are indiscriminately admitted, and receive instruction without reference to their religious creed, although that instruction is *purely Christian*, the Bible and the Gospels being the first books that are put into their hands.

These schools were founded, amidst amazing

difficulties and opposition, about ten years ago. At that time no woman in Egypt could either read or write; parents objected to their female children being instructed in either of those first elements of education, protesting that it would only enable them to receive and to write love-letters! and apparently totally over-looking the great consideration that moral instruction would raise their minds to higher and better aspirations. At last, in the year 1835, when the war in Syria had created such troubles throughout the Viceroy's dominions, when families were divided, husbands being in Syria, and their wives and children in Egypt, and *vice versâ*, and their only means of communication being through the medium of public scribes, which prohibited anything like private feeling or the free expression of opinion being entrusted to them, an opening occurred for so desirable an object to be effected. In that juncture, Mr. Lieder stepped forward and represented to these people in their painful dilemma, how completely the knowledge of reading and writing would have overcome their actual embarrassments, and how urgent it was that their children should be spared the recurrence of them. There is no eloquence half so persuasive or convincing as suffering that comes home to

the hearer's heart; consequently, the very people who had originally shown themselves such stubborn opponents to moral enlightenment, gladly embraced it when their wants pointed it out as a source of consolation to themselves, and Mr. Lieder seized upon the moment to carry into execution the admirable theories which have at last produced such good fruits under his energetic superintendence.

We first visited the girls' school, the most interesting and attractive part of the Cairo Mission, and which is under the special care of Mrs. Lieder. It is divided into two departments, the high class and the Lancastrian school. In the first of these we found a number of children, apparently from seven to fourteen years of age, occupied in transcribing, under the superintendence of a most respectable looking man, a Syrian Christian, portions of the Scriptures in Arabic, so beautifully written that I asked permission to bring away some samples of them with me. Some of these girls were exceedingly well dressed, being the children of persons of a superior class, who are now only too glad to avail themselves of the advantages of such a system of education for their daughters. During the forenoon, the girls receive mental instruction, and in

the afternoon learn sewing and embroidery. The language taught is Arabic, but a few learn English also, and all receive instruction in the Christian Catechism. They are taught reading, writing, keeping accounts, plain work, embroidery, washing and ironing, and such useful and homely branches of education as enable them to take the direction of an establishment when they marry, upon a very different footing to that maintained by the untutored females of Mahometan countries,— or to earn their livelihood by their own industry, should they remain with their parents.

The Lancastrian school is conducted in every part as in England, and is under the immediate direction of a Syrian woman, a Christian from Mount Lebanon, whom Mr. Lieder declares to have been his right hand in the original formation of the schools; five of the pupils of the high class assisting by turns as monitors under her. The children commence with the alphabet, and advance step by step until they can read portions of the Scriptures from the lesson-book. Every day part of Dr. Watts's Catechism is read to them, which they are required to repeat, and thus the whole is progressively committed to their memory.

In another part of the same building is the school for Coptic youths who are destined for the priesthood, and who are here instructed in theology and the principles of the Christian faith, according to the tenets of the Coptic Church of which they are to be ministers. Mr. Lieder had to contend with more difficulties and disadvantages in the formation of this school than in that of the others, owing in a great measure to the want of suitable teachers, and partly also to the difficulty of finding youths who had already passed through the elementary instructions of a common day-school; so that he was obliged to receive boys who, although for the most part recommended by the Copt Patriarch, could not read their own language. The pupils of this school are made to study first the Ancient Coptic tongue, which, although a dead language, it is inevitably necessary that they should understand, as it is a law of the Coptic Church that none can be ordained Priest or Bishop without such knowledge. Secondly Arabic, which, being their vernacular tongue, is the chief medium of their future usefulness in preaching the Gospel. And thirdly English, which language, next to Arabic, is of the greatest importance on account of our extensive literature; for as the Cairo Mission

possesses in the Arabic language, works only conveying the first rudiments of education, English is required as a vehicle to a wider field of instruction, and has therefore been adopted as a means of disseminating knowledge both sacred and profane.

Mr. Lieder's pupils are sufficiently versed in these languages to transpose the Scriptures from one to the other with great facility; and they are also exercised in the composition of homilies in English (homilies replace sermons in the Copt service), some of which were shown to me, and, as far as I had time to peruse them, appeared to me to be remarkable for the correctness and ease of their diction, and the clear insight they evinced of Scriptural knowledge. Mr. Lieder expounds practically to these youths every evening a portion of the Scriptures, and thus no difficult and important passages are suffered to remain doubtful to their comprehension. He has also taught them church music, and they chaunt the Psalms both in English and Arabic very well; a wonderful improvement upon the droning chaunt of the Copt priests, which is precisely like the monotonous hum with which the Moslems fancy they chaunt the Koran. They attend the Church of England service every Sunday in the chapel of the Cairo

mission, and sing the Psalms and chaunt the responses in English, in a manner highly creditable to their instructor and to themselves.

Below stairs is a third school, which is composed of the children of houseless beggars, who are thus snatched from misery and mendicancy, and enabled to become useful and decent members of the social community. There are thirty-eight of these destitute little creatures in the school, all of them apparently under ten years of age,—some not more than three or four. They are clothed and fed by Mr. and Mrs. Lieder, and only return to their parents at night; their food consists of a flap of Arab bread, a little cheese, and either a raw onion or cucumber to each; and this is supplied to thirty-eight individuals for four dollars a month!

Mr. Lieder's schools have received the open sanction of the Copt Patriarch; he attended the first public examination of them, which took place two years ago, and showed himself both gratified and surprised by the order in which it was conducted, and the instruction of the pupils. The girls' school more especially interested him, as it was the first institution for female education which he had ever seen; and he was perfectly astonished when he saw their exercises in writing

and arithmetic, and heard them read the Scriptures (probably better than he could do himself) —attainments, but a short time ago, unheard of for females in Egypt. Besides, the perfect liberty of conscience which Mr. Lieder leaves to the little flocks entrusted to his care, cannot but obtain for him the suffrages and confidence of all parties. He abstains from any undue efforts at conversion, but sows the good seed in the genial and healthful soil of young and tender minds, and leaves it there to germ, and perhaps to produce in due season, "grain ripe for the harvest." Let us hope so at least! Faith so ardent and so pure—learning so well applied as his, merit results no less important; and those who have had opportunities of witnessing the work of Christian charity and love to which this truly inestimable pair have devoted themselves, and of understanding the difficulties they have had to contend with before they could carry it into execution, cannot but put up a prayer, however weak or wavering their own religious feelings may previously have been, for the prosperity of an undertaking so praiseworthy, so disinterested, and so truly philanthropic and unfettered in spirit.

After this most interesting examination was over, I was detained for some time in Mrs.

Lieder's apartments, as she wished to introduce me to the most beautiful Egyptian woman in Cairo, who had sent to say that she intended to pay her a visit. This lady is a converted Jewess, and has been twice married; her first husband, by whom she has a daughter just marriageable, was a wealthy Jew banker; her present one is a French physician settled in Cairo, by whom she has a second daughter, still a child. Madame V. herself, looks scarcely thirty, and is faultless in face and form; such is the perfection of her beauty, that Mohammed Ali declared he would give twenty-thousand purses (a purse is about five pounds English) to have her in his hareem. She arrived at Mrs. Lieder's, accompanied by her eldest daughter and by a young Italian *medico*, in the Pasha's service, to whom the young lady is engaged to be married; but no other gentleman was allowed to be present during the visit, with the exception of Mr. Lieder. The two ladies were enveloped in dust-coloured loose silk pelisses tied round the waist with gold cords and tassels, and over these were worn the black Egyptian habbareh and white face-veils, which in this country always envelop the person out of doors. These outer garments were soon laid aside, and we had ample opportunity of examining the beau-

tiful person and elegant dress of Madame V. and her very pretty daughter.

The mother is the first Oriental married woman whom I have ever seen preserve her shape, her figure being as elegant as her countenance is beautiful; and her clothes fitted inimitably to her well-formed shoulders and waist. She wore a yellak with long hanging sleeves of a beautiful thick damask silk of many colours blended, but with a sort of golden flush over the surface, worked all round with gold braiding. Her long full trousers were of the same silk, embroidered down the seams with gold; and round her waist was rolled a beautiful Cashmere shawl. Her jacket was of the finest purple cloth richly worked with gold braiding, the close sleeves descending a little below the elbow, and showing beneath them the white crape ones of her chemise and the hanging silk ones of her yellak. Her bosom was shaded by a white gauze handkerchief, which just revealed what modesty permitted of a truly beautiful form; a large diamond brooch fastened its folds, and several strings of fine orient pearls encircled her throat. The coiffure of Madame V— was composed of the small Egyptian *tarboosh*, enriched with a large diamond *choors*, placed quite at the back of the head, and

her hair arranged beneath in a multitude of small braids hanging down her back far below the waist. A broad bandeau of diamonds bound her forehead, and a piece of millinery composed of black crape laid over some stiff material, and fashioned into the shape of an ostrich feather, was laid upon the top of her head and fell over one ear and cheek like a drooping plume. This crape feather was covered with fine diamond ornaments in the shape of flowers, feathers, crescents, and stars, and produced a most brilliant effect. Her ear-rings were of diamonds, and her fingers covered with sparkling rings and dyed in the most approved fashion with the precious *henna* that is brought from Arabia, and is not to be purchased in the bazaars of Cairo. Madame V.'s beautiful eyes and eyebrows were unstainedly free from *kohl*, and the dark hair parted back from her clear pale forehead, showed that noble feature to the greatest advantage. I could detect none of the Jewish characteristics in her face; great dignity and sweetness of expression were there, and an intellectual charm both in her countenance and manner that stamped the woman of education and refinement. How unlike the generality of Eastern women, whose minds are, like their gardens, one tangle of

flowers and weeds, and whose manners startle by a *naiveté* and unsophistication that often merge into actual coarseness!

The young lady's dress was exactly fashioned like her mother's, but differed in colours and materials, and although of a less costly description was perfectly elegant in its details. One peculiarity of it I shall alone notice; several large unset emeralds merely pierced through the upper part were suspended to a necklace of twisted pearls, a fashion much in vogue here, but which has something very barbaric in it; for although, by leaving its natural form and size intact, the value of the stone may be preserved, its beauty is entirely lost. Madame V. and her daughter both understand French, and I dare say speak it also, but we could not persuade them to utter a syllable in that language beyond "Oui, Madame," and I was therefore obliged to tax Mrs. Lieden's complaisance, whose knowledge of the Arabic language and able *Dragomanship* alone enabled me to carry on any conversation with her beautiful visitor.

* * * * *

In the evening we had the famous Cairo Magician to give us a specimen of the much vaunted magic of Old Egypt, which some persons main-

tain has descended to a few of the soothsayers of this land from the wise men of the Pharaohs! A large party had assembled to witness the exhibition, but not in one instance did the old rogue and his young accomplice stumble by mistake upon anything that could be perverted into a semblance of the persons we called for. Never was there so shallow and transparent a humbug! That the noble, the learned, the wise, and the pious should have been deluded into a belief in anything so glaringly deceptive is not only marvellous, but carries with it something humiliating to the human intellect. The delusion of some of these, who have made public their adhesion to the necromancy of Modern Egypt is, however, I believe principally owing to the conduct of the late Osman Effendi, the Scotch renegade, who made himself a party to the deceptions that were practised upon travellers, and being acquainted with the personal peculiarities of many of the English persons of note whom the Magician was directed to evoke, had it in his power to give him such hints as sufficed to make up a tolerably resembling portrait, and one calculated to startle the uninitiated. Since the death of Osman Effendi, not one feat of necromancy has succeeded. Mr. Lane has had the moral courage

to make his recantation public, after having published his adherence to the fraud practised upon him, as it had been upon others, in a way that had brought home conviction to his mind. And this was noble of him, for few men like to admit that they have been duped; but it was also incumbent upon Mr. Lane thus to act, for his opinion was of sufficient weight to mislead many who were content blindly to accept his convictions, and to base their own belief upon the authority of so celebrated a name.

As for the exhibition before us, it was as dull as it was inefficient, and possessed none of those witty buffooneries which render the most bungling failures amusing in avowed charlatans. The would-be Wizard came into the room with the air of a man who anticipated the disgrace which the detection of his usurped qualifications must bring upon him. All the preliminary pantomime, which has been so minutely described by travellers in this country, was performed by him with a crest-fallen air and a nervous tremor which showed that he was aware that the reign of his imposture was over, and apprehensive that his failure would be rewarded by a kicking down stairs. We had the furnace of burning charcoal, the perfumes scattered upon it, the spells written

upon slips of paper and then burned, the muttered invocation, &c. Then a boy was called in, a little negro slave, whom I had directed should be in waiting for that purpose, as we knew that there could be no collusion between him and the necromancer; and after the usual cabalistical signs were drawn upon the palm of his hand, ink was poured into it, and a written charm placed on his forehead under his tarboosh, and he was then directed to look into the ink, and say whether he saw anything in it. But he was either too stupid to comprehend the part he was expected to play, or too honest to enter into it; for after staring into the little black pool in his hand until his eyes appeared starting out of their sockets, he declared that he saw nothing. He was dismissed by the magician as unfit for the experiment, and another boy was introduced, who soon proved himself to be better up to the trick. The same ceremonies were repeated; and so much incense cast upon the glowing brazier that the part of the room where we were assembled was quite enveloped in a fragrant mist. Then the mummery commenced in right earnest. The boy, upon being desired to look into the ink contained in his hand, and say what he saw, promptly

answered that he saw a broom sweeping; and then followed in succession the declared appearance of the tents, the flags, the Sultan and his army, &c., which is always the preamble to the more serious part of the business, and which having been gone through to the complete satisfaction of the magician, he pronounced the boy to be sufficiently under the charm to describe the appearance of any absent person whom he should be directed by one of us to evoke.

Our medium of communication with the boy was Doctor Abbott, whose thorough knowledge of Arabic enabled us thus to have an interpreter beyond the reach of all suspicion of collusion; and through his assistance many English celebrities were called for, from the Duke of Wellington downwards. The boy professed to see each and all of them reflected in the ink in his hand, but beyond their wearing white or black hats, light or dark-coloured pantaloons, nothing satisfactory could be got at by us;—not one of those happy chance hits which sometimes serve to hang a doubt upon, not a lucky mistake which is sometimes sufficient to form the corner-stone of a future controversy, did the magician's young accomplice stumble upon! Among other

personages, the King of the Carribee Islands was gravely evoked by one of the party, and he was accordingly represented by the youngster as fair and light-haired, and dressed in a white waistcoat, a blue cravat, and long boots! But the climax of the imposture was reached by a lady asking the boy whether he saw General Tom Thumb, and if so, to give a description of him. He replied in the affirmative, and commenced his portrait by saying that the General was a very tall man, with a red face and black beard!

Hitherto we had suffered the several failures of this pair of impostors to pass without comment, having previously agreed among ourselves to give them full play, and neither to browbeat or intimidate the performers by any precipitate declaration of our insight into their most shallow system of humbug; but this last specimen of it was too much for our forbearance or our gravity. The *séance* was broken up amidst shouts of laughter, and the Arab seer was dismissed and paid, with the assurance that although he had earned our money he had not won our confidence, and an injunction to leave off such clumsy attempts at necromancy, and adopt some more honourable means of gaining a livelihood. Some of the persons present thought that he had proved himself wholly

undeserving of payment; but we would not tell him unpleasant truths without having purchased the right to do so, and therefore his full demand of eight dollars was given to him, and he pocketed the money and the affront, and slunk away without venturing to advance a syllable in defence of his impeached power over the world of spirits.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PYRAMIDS.—THE SPHINX.—EXTERIOR OF CHEOPS' PYRAMID. —INTERIOR OF CHEOPS' PYRAMID.—ARAB GUIDES.—QUEEN'S CHAMBER.—KING'S CHAMBER.—UPPER CHAMBERS.—INTERIOR PASSAGES.—ASCENT OF THE PYRAMID.—DESCENT.—CEPHREN'S PYRAMID.—MYCERINUS'S PYRAMID.—SMALLER PYRAMIDS.—TOMBS.—FATIGUE.

Pyramids of Ghizeh, Feb. 1, 1846.

Look at the date of my letter and then congratulate me, you who know how long I have been wishing to be where I now am! The favourite project of years, so often talked of, so often attempted, so often relinquished, that from being one of the greatest wishes of my heart it appeared to have gradually subsided into the greatest of all impossibilities, is at last accomplished;—I have seen, touched, entered into the Pyramids! I once promised that should such ever be the case, I would write to you from the *summit* of one of them; but, alas! I am tracing these lines from the *base*,—a *base admission* (pardon the vile pun) to be made by one who this morning cantered across the plain of Ghizeh,

bent upon going all lengths to satisfy an ardent yet reasonable curiosity. I am not so vain as to suppose, like Napoleon, that "du haut des Pyramides quarante siècles me contemplent," but if by any chance those venerable *centenaires* should have perched there, and folded "their dusky wings" for that purpose, never will they have contemplated mortification more complete than mine on this occasion, when the weak flesh has caused the strong spirit to succumb to it. Do not expect that at such a moment I can give you a satisfactory or even a coherent description of what I have seen; for besides the physical discomfort that attends the mere mechanical act of writing as I now am doing, seated upon a fragment of stone, with my knees for a desk, the south wind scattering the sands of the desert over my paper, and drying the words as fast as I have traced them, my fingers trembling with fatigue and emotion, and a little black slave holding the inkstand for me and grinning so prodigiously at my (to him incomprehensible) employment as to divert my attention every now and then to himself, my mind is in that state of chaotic confusion which precludes the possibility of anything like connected details.

It is a moment in one's life never to be forgotten, that in which for the first time one approaches so near to the Pyramids of Ghizeh as not only to obtain a distinct view of the platform upon which they are based, but to be made fully aware of their stupendous size. Rising from their rocky pedestal they appear in all their magnitude before you, the noblest as well as the oldest monuments in the world, while in front of them, like an advanced guard, crouches the Sphinx, the vast outline of its head alone



discernible above the sepulchre of sand that has engulphed its other parts. Perhaps it was because I had heard less, and thought less of the Sphinx than of the Pyramids, that I have been so powerfully struck by it; but be that as it may, nothing that I have as yet seen in Egypt

has produced so deep an effect upon me. I could have remained for hours before it, looking upwards at the shattered countenance with its placid smile and melancholy eyes fixed in sad serenity upon the east. Never surely did any mutilated piece of sculpture offer so much expression; for defeatured as it is in a manner that would render any other face hideous, there is a strange mysterious charm in the contrast of the smiling lips and the pensive, earnest eyes that fascinates the gaze, in a manner beyond that which mere beauty commands. And yet there *is* beauty in those broken outlines,—the Ethiop beauty of old Egypt; not the negro type, as some travellers have averred, but that which was classical before the purer contours and finer lineaments of Grecian art were known; that which we may imagine to have characterised the Egyptian bride of Solomon, or the mother of the great Sesostris: and that which is still to be seen in some of the slave girls of Abyssinia, with their full soft lips and their large serious eyes.

Might and majesty in repose, but in watchful repose, are the characteristics of the Sphinx; it is a glorious creation still, half-buried and shattered as it is,—how surpassingly so must it have appeared, before the destroyer's hand

had approached it! And *who* was the desecrator that first defaced that sublime Colossus? Was the deed that of a fanatic, or of a *barbarian* only? Mentally I interrogated those stony eyes upon the mighty changes that had passed before them like troubled dreams,—upon the struggling ambitions that had made this antique land their field of action, from the day of the glory and wisdom of Egypt to her abasement,—from the princely Pharaohs to the mercenary Memlooks,—from the Persian Cambyses to the Corsican Napoleon! And their tranquil gaze fixed in sad expectancy upon the east, appeared to answer, "Many changes shall I yet behold, and the greatest is still to come!"

Although within the last very few years Colonel Howard Vyse caused the sand to be cleared away from the Sphinx, it has again accumulated to a degree that leaves nothing disengaged but the head and neck; not even the outline of the back is now to be traced out; and we could only guess at its proportions by comparing them with that part which as yet has defied the subtle encroachment of the desert. In a hollow that has been scooped out before the bust, the extreme summit of a granite tablet bearing the sculptured emblem of immortality,

(the winged globe) is just visible. That tablet forms the upper part of an altar placed between the forepaws of the Sphinx; and its hieroglyphic inscriptions tell that Thothmes the Fourth, of the glorious eighteenth dynasty, was the Pharaoh who caused the monstrous creation to be sculptured out of the living rock. This fixes its date to the fifteenth century before the Christian era, seven centuries subsequent to the period when, according to received ideas, the Pyramids were built. But a German *savant* has lately been in Egypt (Doctor Leipsius) who throws back the date of these, the oldest monuments in the world, to *six thousand* years; and according to his computations, and to the new light he has received from his personal researches, all the Pharaonic structures are much older than we have hitherto supposed them to be, the dynasties from which they date being of a more remote antiquity than Sir Gardner Wilkinson and other learned authorities have ventured to assign to them.

It was only when I stood under the immediate shadow of the great pyramid of Cheops, that I became thoroughly imbued with its immensity. During the whole of our ride from Cairo to the feet of the Sphinx, my mind had been vacillating

between wonder and expectation, occasionally dashed with disappointment at finding that the Pyramids did not increase upon me in the degree I had imgained they would have done; but when I dismounted at the base of the first, and that my eyes wandering upwards and sideways over the enormous surface of stone, suddenly descried near the summit sundry human figures scrambling towards the goal, and looking scarcely larger than sparrows, I felt literally overwhelmed by its magnitude. The severe simplicity of these wonderful structures increases the effect produced by them, for, as the eye is not seduced by any beauty or intricacy of details, it at once takes in and comprehends the stupendous *whole.*

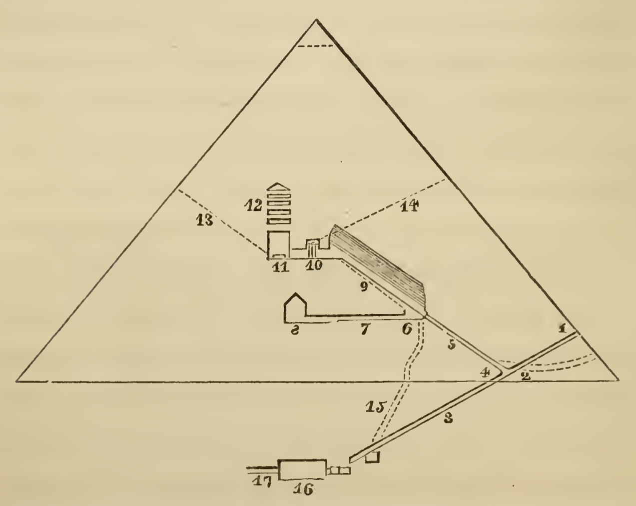
One is not suffered to remain long in quiet contemplation of the exterior of Cheops' pyramid, for the Arab guides, whose privilege it is to show the wonders of the place, are very vociferous in their invitations either to walk *up* or to walk *in.* After a consultation upon *which* would be the most advisable to commence with, we decided upon the latter. But I must reserve the details of this part of our expedition until my return to Cairo; I have redeemed my pledge by writing part of my letter to you from the Pyramids, but I find that it would be impossible to terminate it here,

unless, (which I do not mean to do) I were to pass the night in the adjacent tomb, which is sometimes occupied by travellers who do not like being called out of their warm beds in Cairo at cock-crow, to scamper thirteen or fourteen miles on donkey-back before breakfast. So herewith I fold up my paper, and, as the Magazines have it, "the remainder will be given in our next number."

Cairo, Feb. 2.

From my early childhood I have endeavoured to form some idea from written descriptions of what the interior of the Pyramids must be, and even up to the moment of my approaching them, I continued this exercise of the imagination, but in vain; I felt that I was wandering in a dark labyrinth of conjecture, and knocking my head to very little purpose against a great many sharp corners in the shape of doubts and mistakes. How, then, can I undertake the difficult task of myself describing so as to be intelligible, that which no written description ever succeeded in making me understand, and which nothing short of personal inspection could bring home to my perfect comprehension, although I had sought for information from the best and most authentic sources? I will endeavour, however, to give

you some idea of the dark locality into which I penetrated yesterday, and to facilitate this, I have copied from Colonel Howard Vyse's work a vertical section of the Great Pyramid, which includes



VERTICAL SECTION OF THE GREAT PYRAMID FROM SOUTH TO NORTH THROUGH PASSAGES AND CHAMBERS.

1. Entrance.
2. Forced entrance.
3. Passage descending at an angle of 27 degrees.
4. Granite Slab.
5. Gallery ascending at an angle of 27 degrees.
6. Entrance to Well.
7. Horizontal Passage.
8. Queen's Chamber.
9. Great Passage.
10. Horizontal Passage with Portcullis.
11. King's Chamber.
12. Five low Chambers to lighten roof.
13. South Air Channel.
14. North Air Channel.
15. Well.
16. Subterranean Chamber.
17. Unexplored Subterranean Passage.

all the interior features that are necessary to render intelligible my pilgrimage therein; and have numbered them so as to enable you to refer to them as you peruse my adventures.

I shall endeavour to simplify as much as possible, not only what I saw, but all the surmises advanced respecting the probable purposes for which those different parts were intended. Without entering upon the question of how much still remains unexplored of the interior of Cheops' pyramid, or dwelling upon the mass of conjectures already afloat respecting the original destination of those mysterious structures—whether they were tombs, temples, or observatories,—I shall assume the supposition of their having been royal sepulchres, and treat of Cheops' pyramid as the burial-place prepared by a powerful sovereign during his life-time for himself, and, perhaps, for his queen, and built with the firm determination that no one in succeeding ages should discover where his body was placed when once it was snugly deposited there. So now refer to my drawing, and follow my footsteps.

Each of our party were attended by two Arabs, and we blindly gave ourselves up to their safe conduct, and, lighted by their flickering wax-candles, pursued our way. It would be well could travellers insist upon none but their guides accompanying them into the interior of the Pyramids, but a pack of idlers always follow, and add in no inconsiderable degree to the discomfort of

the operation. Mohammed did all he could to keep us clear from this annoyance, and believed that he had succeeded; but we soon found out that they had eluded his precaution, and that a dozen supernumeraries were upon our heels. From the entrance we descended by the inclined plane No. 3, as far as No. 4, where an upright slab of granite appears to bar all further ingress; but by means of a short circuitous passage, which has been forced through the side of the channel, we found ourselves at the other side of that obstacle. From that point springs the ascending gallery, No. 5, which being a tunnel not more than three feet high, we were forced to crawl along bent almost double, choked with the dust raised by so many feet, and dragged between two screaming Arabs, one of whom *pulls*, the other *pushes*, their victim up the weary ascent. Thus we reached the foot of the great passage, No. 9, from whence a horizontal tunnel, No. 7, about three feet high, branches off right into the heart of the pyramid; and at its extremity is the room called the Queen's chamber, No. 8, which Sir Gardner Wilkinson states to be immediately under the apex of the pyramid. This chamber, the ceiling of which is painted, contains nothing; nor do I believe that any traces were ever dis-

covered, notwithstanding its appellation, of a Queen Pharaoh ever having been buried there. After reposing a few minutes in it, we retraced our steps to the foot of the great passage, which leads to the King's Chamber.

This great passage, or shaft, appears very lofty after emerging from the low tunnel, but I was unable to calculate its height by the uncertain flicker of the candles carried by our attendants, and the upper part appeared quite lost in obscurity. It continues in the same ascending degree as the gallery, No. 5, and is far more difficult of ascent, inasmuch as that the polished granite slabs, with which it is entirely cased, are so slippery, and have such slight indentations for the feet, that we could only master it by crawling up on all fours. At the top of the great passage we arrived at a horizontal one, No. 10, where grooves intended for portcullises are manifest, and a few paces further we entered the King's chamber, No. 11, which is the principal room as yet discovered in the pyramid. It is of an oblong form, from thirty to forty feet long, and about half that width, the roof flat, and that, as well as the walls, formed of red granite; but there is neither sculpture or hieroglyphics to be found in it. This room contains an empty sar-

cophagus, which, being equally free from any embellishment or inscription, has afforded no clue to the discovery of whose body was originally intended to be deposited thérein, or whether it ever did contain one. Indeed this absence of hieroglyphic legends has afforded the plausible argument that the construction of the pyramids preceded the use of letters; but the recent discoveries of Colonel Howard Vyse has triumphantly defeated that assertion; for, in the small rooms, No. 12, opened by him over the King's chamber, he found hieroglyphics containing the name of the Pharaoh (Suphis), to whom the building of Cheops' pyramid is attributed. However, even if such a discovery had not been made, I think that Sir Gardner Wilkinson's argument is conclusive, that it would have been an anomaly for a people who were sufficiently enlightened to execute such a monument, to have remained without a written language.

The rooms, No. 12, above the King's chamber, five in number, were not visited by us, nor are they now accessible, unless one goes provided with ladders, ropes, &c., to effect an entry from the horizontal passage, No. 10, from the roof of which they are entered. They are in fact merely *entresols*, and were not intended for sepulchral

chambers, but were constructed as a break-weight to lighten the pressure of the vast upper portion of the pyramid upon the ceiling of the King's chamber, which would otherwise have been crushed in by it.

Now, assuming that the King's chamber was the depository of the royal remains, you will perceive the elaborate contrivances which, to all appearances, were employed, in order both to resist the force and to elude the ingenuity of posterity in an attempt to violate the privacy of the mausoleum. First of all, the body having been deposited in the chamber, all access to it from the great passage, No. 9, was intercepted by four portcullises, No. 10. And again at No. 4, you will observe that the granite slab was calculated altogether to mislead any persons who should find their way into the descending passage; for it was carefully covered with stone similar to that which formed the sides of the descending passage, so that any one who had penetrated so far would be in complete ignorance of any upper passage, such as that which springs from behind the granite slabs, being in existence. Sir Gardner Wilkinson considers that the workmen, who must have shut themselves in when they placed the granite slab at the entrance of

the ascending passage, No. 4, took advantage of the well, No. 15, to effect their retreat, by lowering themselves into the descending passage, which then formed one uninterrupted channel, and apparently the only one that led from the entrance. It would appear that, with a view to mislead intruders, the said entrance was artfully placed *not* in the middle, but at the distance of twenty-three feet from the centre of the north face of the pyramid. This was done evidently with a view to deceive spoliators; and in the case of the first entry that we have on record, made by the Caliph Mamoon, A.D. 820, who caused the Great Pyramid to be broken open, expecting to find treasure there, the workmen effected a forced passage exactly in the centre of the northern front, but when they had proceeded a few feet, their attention was attracted to the real passage by the hollow sound produced by the accidental falling of some stones therein. From the forced entry they had made, they effected their way *into* the real passage, and worked their way *out* by the present entrance through which all subsequent travellers have obtained ingress (as I have already described) to the King's chamber. The circumstance of

their having only found an empty sarcophagus there, has left mankind still in doubt as to whether that room had been the real depository of the royal remains; but might not earlier depredators have found their way there, and having rifled the tomb, closed up the entrance so effectually as to elude detection?

I believe that, even now, there are many persons who entertain the belief that these discovered passages were originally made only as a blind to mislead intruders, and that the secret object of the Pyramids still lies undiscovered in the direction of the descending passage; and below the chamber, No. 16, called the rock chamber, beyond which exists a horizontal passage, No. 17, to the extent of fifty-two feet, where there is a well, which was explored by Colonel Howard Vyse without any result. Some, I believe, would even go so far as to maintain that the sacred chamber was sunk sufficiently deep in the rock upon which the pyramid is based, to bear out the opinion that Herodotus gathered from the Egyptian priests of his day,—a hearsay evidence, perhaps, rashly advanced by the Father of History,—that the Pharaoh's body lay in an insulated subterraneous chamber beneath

the pyramid, at a sufficient depth to admit of the introduction of water from the Nile, which entirely surrounded the tomb.

I have not dwelt upon the fatigue and discomfort incidental to a visit into the interior of the great pyramid, because I did not wish to break my account of the locality, and perhaps render it unintelligible by any ill-timed description of my own sensations. But every step that I advanced into that airless atmosphere, increased the oppression I gradually felt creeping over me; and the united influence of the heat, dust, the manner in which I was hurried along, the great fatigue entailed by the slipperiness of the descending and ascending passages, and, more than all, the crouching position obliged to be maintained for so considerable a portion of the way, at last fairly overcame me. By the time we had retraced our steps as far as the end of the great passage, I felt assailed by a stifling sensation of sickness, and the horrible idea came over me, that if I fainted, I never should be brought to myself in that suffocating atmosphere. The very dread I felt of such a casualty precipitated it; breathless, powerless, unable to proceed, I entreated to be laid on the ground for a few moments. Instead of

giving me air, the Arab guides all crowded round me, and pulling off their caps, began to fan me with all their might; this put the finishing stroke to my wretchedness. In the gasping terror of that moment, I fancied that the candles were extinguishing, and that I should die in utter darkness; these were the last sensations of which I was conscious—"for the love of Heaven, do not let the lights go out!" I murmured—blackness and oblivion followed! When I recovered my senses, I was in the open air and drenched with water; I felt as though awakening from a horrible dream—but how I was carried through those low passages in which it is impossible for any one to stand upright, I cannot yet comprehend.

These egotistical details are very uninteresting, and would be quite unpardonable, were they not given to account for the disappointment I alluded to in the first portion of my letter written yesterday. The tremor and exhaustion which were the consequence of the swoon into which I had fallen, had so completely disabled me, that I was unequal to the exertion of ascending the exterior of the pyramid—an undertaking that requires no small portion of moral and physical energy. After walking to

the starting point and examining the stepping stones, I was obliged to relinquish all idea of it for the time being, and suffered my friends to ascend without me; while seated near the base, I watched their upward progress with something between a feeling of envy at their superior capability, and one of self-congratulation at being in so much more comfortable a position than they were, for they literally appeared to me as though they would be torn in two by their conductors. My maid accompanied them, but such was the fatigue she underwent in scrambling up the immense stones that form the irregular steps by which an ascent is effected, that when she arrived at the place where the Arabs cry out in very good English, "*half-way!*" she was very urgent to be allowed to wait there for the return of the party; but in order to delude her into a continuation of her venturous enterprize, she was told that the descent was by another side, and that she would have to find her own way back. She was therefore forced to go on, and at last accomplished the ascent amidst the screams and cheers of her three guides; seventeen minutes were exactly employed in effecting this part of the undertaking.

It was while my friends were reposing themselves upon the platform at the summit of the Great Pyramid, that I wrote the commencement of this letter, which I had so vainly hoped would have recorded my triumphant achievement; but as soon as they hailed me from the top to apprize me that they were about to return, I stationed myself where I could watch their descent, and it really appeared to me to be a more alarming operation than the ascent, from the prodigious leaps they were every now and then obliged to make from one projecting stone to another, and alighting upon ledges that appeared to be scarcely wide enough to afford them safe footing. However, they reached the bottom without even making a false step; and when they had rested a sufficient time, we mounted our donkeys and rode all round the Great Pyramid, which is the best way to impress oneself with a knowledge of its dimensions. One of the guides offered to ascend to the summit in five minutes if we would give him five piastres for doing so. We agreed, and away he went with the agility of a chamois, and honestly fulfilled his undertaking, being up and down again within ten minutes. Another of them then proposed to perform the same

feat on the Second Pyramid, a much more difficult exploit, as the upper part of it still preserves its casing of smooth stone, and travellers never attempt to ascend it. Away he went too, and performed his compact with the same success, going up to the very apex; but as he was coming down by another side, we were startled at perceiving a chacal in full career up the centre of the western face of the same pyramid, bounding upwards from stone to stone, in a straight line, but when he was more than half-way to the top, something apparently startled him, for suddenly turning off to the north, he ran along the ledge of stone till he reached the angle of the pyramid, and turning round the corner disappeared. We thought of the old Egyptian belief in Metempsychosis, and fancied that the transmigrated soul of Cephren might animate that chacal, and lead him thus to prowl about the pyramid which he had caused to be constructed in the days of his Pharaohship.

Cephren's (or as it is commonly called the Second) Pyramid, appears to me to be more perpendicular in its formation than Cheops', and as I have already told you, the casing with which it was originally covered, still remains on the upper portion. Some writers have

doubted that the First Pyramid was encased in the same manner, but not only have we Herodotus's authority for its having been so, but Colonel Howard Vyse, during his researches, having caused some accumulation of sand and stones to be cleared away from its base, discovered portions of its original casing upon that lower part which has for ages been buried under the soil. The material of which the Great Pyramid is constructed, is stone from the quarries of the Libyan hills; but the casing was composed of a much finer and whiter material, a soft and delicate grained white stone peculiar to the Mokattam hills, susceptible of being finely worked and highly polished; and this outer covering was probably removed by the Arabian Caliphs, when they irreverently drew upon those ancient monuments, for materials wherewith to construct the public edifices of their new city of Cairo.

The Second Pyramid is not so well built as the First, although part of the materials employed were superior, the lower tiers being of granite. It was opened by Belzoni in 1816, and found to contain passages similar to those in Cheops' Pyramid, but only one chamber, in which there is a sarcophagus half-buried in the

floor. The Third, or Mycerinus's Pyramid, was opened by Colonel Howard Vyse, and found to contain a chamber with a painted roof, constructed upon the same plan as the Queen's chamber in the Great Pyramid, and having a vacant space over it to prevent its being crushed in by the weight of the blocks. It was in this pyramid that the sarcophagus was found which was sent to England, but never arrived there, the vessel it was shipped in, having foundered at sea. The wooden coffin or mummy-case bearing the name of King Mycerinus that was enclosed in that sarcophagus, however, is now in the British Museum, and also a body that was found in the passage of the pyramid lying between two large stones, and was by some supposed to be that of Mycerinus.

This pyramid was originally cased with granite and was considered to be the most beautiful structure of the three.

Besides the three principal pyramids of Ghizeh, there are three smaller ones supposed to have been built for the tombs of the queens of Cheops, Cephrenes, and Mycerinus. They were all opened by Colonel Howard Vyse, and the middle one was found to contain an empty stone sarcophagus without sculpture or hiero-

glyphics. But the fact of all these pyramids having been ransacked for treasure by the Caliphs will account for so little having been found in them by recent explorers. The tombs in their immediate vicinity have afforded a richer harvest to the learned in Egyptian antiquities; and Doctor Leipsius, in particular, has lately made most interesting discoveries in some of them, having ascertained that they had contained the bodies of above forty of the chief courtiers and household officers of the Pharaoh Suphis, or Cheops,—he who caused the First Pyramid to be erected. In short, the paintings and sculptures he found there, have furnished him with such information respecting the rank, station, and calling of the tenants of these sepulchral chambers as would enable him to compile a complete Court Calendar of the reign of Cheops, whose antiquity is so remote that no historian or antiquarian has as yet been able to give its precise data. It was in a pit among these tombs that the gold ring now in the possession of Doctor Abbott, and known by the name of Cheops' ring, was found.

We reached Cairo at sunset, thoroughly fatigued with our long ride and above all with our Pyramidical labours. But this morning we

are more than tired ; we are scarcely able to move, with pains in every bone, and stiffened joints, produced by the dreadful crouching position we were oblige to maintain for so long a time in the low narrow passages of the interior of the Pyramid, and the great muscular effort caused by attempting to maintain our footing on the slippery ascents and descents of those dark galleries. Were it not for this state of suffering, I think that I should still doubt of my having been there *in the flesh and blood*, and fancy that I had been again indulging in one of those day-dreams which, in years gone by, have so often transported me, not to the feet, but to the summit of the Great Pyramid. Even yesterday, when I first approached the long-wished-for spot, this strange inexplicable feeling came over me ; I, who had every day for so many weeks been contemplating the Pyramids from afar, could not believe, when I was close to them, that I was *indeed* there, under their very shadow, that these were *really* the monuments I had all my life been longing to behold,—the monuments which Abraham, and Jacob, and Joseph, and Moses, ay, and perhaps the Virgin Mother and her Divine Son, had looked upon,—that there stood the very Sphinx, the mild-faced monster,

of which I had read so many accounts,—that I was my own identical self,—or that all was not a dream! It is thus that we sometimes doubt the reality of that which we have the most ardently desired;—but these aching bones are a painful attestation to the truth of my excursion having been something more than a flight of the imagination, and leave me not the shadow of a doubt that, as an American gentleman expressed himself to me the other day, "I have *realised* the Pyramids!"

Adieu.

CHAPTER V.

MUSTAPHA BEY'S HAREEM.—THE EFFENDEEM.—FLOWERS OF SPEECH.—TURKISH FURNITURE.—VISITORS.—UNREASONABLE EXPECTATIONS.—TURKISH DINNER.—THE BLIND MOTHER.—ROUSTAM BEY'S HAREEM.—THE KADUN.—ELEGANT HAREEM.—HAFIZA.—MODERN INNOVATIONS.—ETIQUETTE.—BACHSHISH.

Cairo, Feb. 7, 1846.

SINCE I last wrote to you I have been introduced by Mrs. Lieder into two of the most distinguished hareems of Cairo, that of Mustapha Bey (the Viceroy's nephew), and that of Roustam Bey, one of his Turkish generals, with the fair inmates of both of which we dined. The ladies had not been previously apprized of our visit, therefore I had the double advantage of seeing them in their every-day garb, instead of being "got up" for exhibition, and of avoiding the tiresome *fantasia*, or entertainment of dancing and singing women, with which they would have thought it necessary to amuse me, had they been aware of my coming. Mrs. Lieder merely sent half-an-hour before to ascertain whether they would be at home to receive her visit; and

when we reached the dwelling of Mustapha Bey, I sent in my dragoman to announce us. We were met at the entrance of the hareem by the chief eunuch, who conducted us up the stone staircase, at the head of which stood two female slaves in waiting to receive us, each holding a Cachemire shawl which she threw over our shoulders, and then ushered us into the presence of Mustapha Bey's wife.

This young lady is one of the most high bred persons in Cairo; she is connected by blood with Mohammed Ali, and was brought up in, and married from, the hareem of his eldest daughter, Nasli Khanoum; and her husband's near connection with the Viceroy entitles them to take precedence next to the Viceroyal family; and, indeed, to hold princely rank. Both are Turkish by birth, but were brought up in Egypt, and adhere in all respects to the manners, customs, and even language of Constantinople. The lady—or as she is called the Effendeem—is not pretty, but graceful and pleasing; short and slight, and dressed in the fashion of Stamboul, in garments composed of costly Cachemire embroidered with gold, and a profusion of diamond ornaments, among which was a splendid crescent fastened to the handkerchief that bound

on her Turkish Fez. Her husband's sister was with her, clothed from head to foot in scarlet-and-gold brocade, and wearing the same description of jewels in her head-dress; but although it is considered supreme *bon ton* here for all the female members of the Viceroy's family to adhere to the Turkish *coiffure*, that peculiar to the women of Cairo is so superior in grace and elegance, so much more becoming, that it really is a sacrifice of vanity, as well as of good taste, not to adopt it in preference to the former.

The welcome given by both ladies to Mrs. Lieder was most affectionate, and their reception of me characterized at once by cordiality and high breeding. They told my companion that *the joy of seeing her caused their hearts to fly away into heaven* — that she was their beloved, and that I, as the sister of her heart, was welcome to the shadow of their house! Such is the magniloquence of Eastern phraseology! We were placed upon European chairs, and, out of compliment to us, they seated themselves in the same manner; and the conversation that commenced, although not embracing the topics that make up the sum of what is called *small talk* in Europe, was wholly divested either of ceremonious stiffness, or of the contrary extreme

sometimes fallen into by the women of the East, I mean a troublesome and indelicate curiosity, elicited by the contrast existing between our manners and dress and their own, and rarely repressed by that sentiment of tact and *convenance*, which is the test at once of a delicate mind and of a careful education. These two young Mahometans were perfectly at their ease, and although full of courteous attentions, betrayed as little inquisitiveness or surprise about my European toilette as the best bred woman in London or Paris could have done.

The room in which we were received is lofty, airy, and scrupulously clean, but bearing no traces of Eastern splendour ; a large Turkey carpet covers the upper part, or *Leewan*, where the sofa is placed ; the cushions, curtains, and *portières*, are of handsome Persian chintz ; and at the lower end of the room is a small European iron bedstead, with mattresses and pillows covered with Aleppo satin, and pink tulle musquito-curtains. This bed is called "the husband's throne," and is not used as a sleeping couch, but as a daily lounge, a sort of easy chair, for Mustapha Bey in his visits to his hareem ; and my attention was directed to it as the handsomest and most notable piece of furniture contained

in the apartment. An European table, with a beautiful cover of lilac and gold, stood in the centre of the room, laid out with china plates of confectionery and bon-bons, over which was thrown a gauze handkerchief; and light cane chairs were placed around it. Chibouques were brought to us, and then coffee in small china *fingarns* with gold *zarfs*, upon a tray covered with a circular cloth of scarlet and gold, negress and Abyssinian slave-girls handsomely dressed serving it to us; one holding the tray on which the cups were arranged, another the coffee-pot, a third a great silver censer filled with fire, and three others distributing the cups.

Some visitors then dropped in; one of them a Turkish lady, and the wife of one of the Viceroy's generals, a most agreeable and intelligent person. She told me that her young son is going to Paris with the sons of Abbas Pasha (Mohammed Ali's grandson), to finish their education there under French professors, and solicited me to permit the boy sometimes to come and see me when I return home; which I was most happy to promise, and shall be still happier to perform, for the poor mother made the request with tears glistening in her eyes. Another lady had just returned from shopping in the bazaars, and caused

her attendant negress to display to us the purchases she had made, which were brought in tied up in a large silk handkerchief. Among the various articles shown and commented upon, one of them, a piece of silk tape, appeared to excite the greatest possible interest; and upon my inquiring what merit so trivial an article could possess, when so many more costly trifles were tossed aside with indifference, I was told that it is looked upon by the Caireen women as a sovereign remedy against that which they, in common with all females in the East, consider to be not only a reproach but a curse—childlessness! They bind this tape round their persons, and confidently believe that it will cause them to become mothers!

When the parcel of finery was disposed of, Mustapha Bey's only child was brought in for me to see; a fine boy of a year old, with a diamond aigrette in his tiny tarboosh, and eyes scarcely less brilliant sparkling beneath. As, generally speaking, Mahometan mothers, from superstitious motives, do not like showing their children to Christian strangers, I was made duly sensible of this mark of confidence and condescension on the part of our amiable hostess; and, while admiring the infant, took especial care to

repeat audibly "Mashallah!" in order to avert from him the consequences of the Evil Eye, which in this country are supposed to be conveyed by the covetousness that accompanies such admiration as elicits praise. The Effendeem marked her sense of this proceeding by such a smile as a fond and happy mother only can bestow, and fearlessly placed the child in our arms. She is still a nurse, but appears scarcely strong enough for such an office, having one of those irritating coughs which wear out the chest, if not checked in time. Her eyes are also slightly affected by the curse of this country, ophthalmia; and upon my promising to send her some of the eye-water with which I had cured so many of our boat-men on the Nile of similar attacks, she requested me to feel her pulse, examine her tongue, and prescribe for her cough also. Mustapha Bey's sister was equally urgent that I should do the same for her; but her expectations were much more unconscionable than the Effendeem's, for she entreated me to give her some medicine that would restore her husband's lost affections to her! adding, that she had made many orisons at the shrine of the Seyyideh Zeynab (the daughter of Ali, and grand-daughter of the Prophet, and who may be termed the Madonna of the Egyptian

women, as they always address their supplications to her), but hitherto without effect.

The Effendeem then showed us all over the hareem, into Mustapha Bey's *Salamlik*, the bath, and the two gardens attached to the house; after which we proposed terminating our visit: but to this she would not listen until we had dined, and so urgent were her solicitations, that we were obliged to acquiesce. Accordingly, on our return from visiting the house, I was placed in the corner of ceremony on the sofa; the Effendeem seated herself on my right hand, Mrs. Lieder was placed on the left, and the slaves then set before us one of those stools inlaid with mother-of-pearl, upon which the dinner-tray is always served. Over this they spread a large square of gold brocade, the ends of which were drawn over our knees. Large napkins embroidered with gold were given us to spread upon our laps, and smaller ones to wipe our fingers: the black slave-girls then brought silver basins and ewers filled with orange-flower water to wash our hands; and Mustapha Bey's sister herself performed that office for me, pouring the water over my hands, and presenting the napkin to dry them with.

Then came the dinner, consisting of a number

of excellent Turkish dishes; among which figured various preparations of pastry that would have done honour to a Parisian confectioner, and of which we partook in the Turkish fashion, that is to say, helping ourselves with our fingers, and dipping our bread into the sauces; the fair hostess giving me all the choice morsels in her own fingers, and, each time that she did so, ejaculating "Bismillah!" (*in the name of God.*) When dinner was over, the same ablutions were performed, in the same manner as previously to the repast; and we then adjourned to the European table, which, being uncovered, displayed a variety of confectionery, sweetmeats and fruit, and at the head of which I was placed; for being, as they said, the friend of "their beloved" (Mrs. Lieder), the place of honour must be given to me.

At the termination of the dessert, the Effendeem proposed that we should visit the mother of Mustapha Bey in her hareem, which forms part of her son's house. Thither we went, accompanied by the two ladies, and found the venerable Khanoum, who is blind, seated upon her *deewan*, propped up by soft cushions, and enveloped in India shawls and costly furs. Her face still possesses the remains of considerable

beauty; and the fixed and immoveable expression of her large, dark, sightless orbs, imparts a vague melancholy to her countenance, which saddens the heart while gazing upon her. Like all old women, be their country what it may, she appeared to delight in dwelling upon the past; and her conversation was wholly composed of reminiscences, for the most part mournful ones. She told us that she had had five Beys for sons, and many daughters, but all of them, save two, were dead, and that "weeping for them had washed out her eyes." Among many gracious things addressed by her to us, she said, that, "although her eyes could not behold us, her heart did, and that our presence gave strength to the shadow of her house." Mustapha Bey, her sole surviving son, is a general officer, and was the individual chosen by the Viceroy to succeed Ismael Pasha, (Mohammed Ali's son, who was murdered in Sennaar,) and to avenge his death there; a mission which he performed with the most sanguinary relentlessness. Still the old Khanoum spoke of him as though he had been a lamb instead of a tiger, and dwelt upon the theme of her only one with a tenderness that caused her blind eyes to moisten. After the indispensable ceremony of

pipes and coffee with her, we took our leave; and, in an outer room, some of the delicate pale green sherbet, which is made from violet blossoms, was served to us previously to the Effendeem and her sister-in-law conducting us to the head of the staircase. There we made our adieux, and departed with reiterated assurances from both, that the house and all in it belonged to us, and that, every time we returned to it, we should bring honour to its shadow, and joy to their hearts.

My other hareem visit was in the house of Roustam Bey, where the introduction of Mrs. Lieder insured me an equally kind reception. The lady is a Circassian by birth, and once formed a part of Mohammed Ali's own hareem: she is said to have possessed considerable influence over his heart and mind, and to be still an object of much regard and respect to him. But the strange mechanism of Oriental morals, which permits a sovereign prince to thin his hareem whenever such is his good pleasure, by bestowing its supernumeraries (provided they have no children) as wives upon his courtiers and favourite officers, without the shadow of a reflection being cast upon the reputations of the fair ones thus discarded, transplanted this

lady, when the two sons she had borne to the Viceroy ceased to exist, from the princely precincts of the citadel to the less brilliant but perhaps happier home of Roustam Bey, where she reigns paramount, without a rival, the legitimate wife, the *kadun*, or lady of the hareem.

The hareem of Roustam Bey is far more magnificent than that of Mustapha Bey, and everything in the establishment is in a corresponding style of elegance. The lady herself is a fine noble-looking creature, apparently about forty, tall, with a commanding port, full, but not clumsy, and possessing a countenance of much animation and intelligence. Her fine black eyes are edged with *khol*, her eyebrows painted to meet over her nose, and her cheeks artistically tinged with rouge, laid on in the most approved way for theatrical effect immediately under the eyes, the lustre of which is considerably heightened by such an adjunct. Her toilette was exceedingly rich, made up of flowered silks, fine purple cloth embroidered with seed pearls, India cashmeres and costly sables. All was disposed in the fashion of Stamboul, far less becoming than that of Cairo, but considered to be better style by the *haut ton* here. Her Turkish Fez was enriched with five

diamond stars fixed in the dark handkerchief that encircled it; her necklace was composed of several strings of fine pearls, fastened together with large unset emeralds; and she had some of the largest and finest turquoises I ever saw, upon her henna-tinted fingers. We were received and conducted upstairs by several black eunuchs; and upon the landing-place were met by two very pretty Georgian or Circassian slave-girls, elegantly dressed in the Turkish fashion, their fair young cheeks rouged, their eyes and eyebrows painted like their mistress's, and their luxuriant light brown tresses hanging in long braids over their shoulders. By these blooming handmaids we were conducted into the presence of the lady of the hareem, who met us at the door of the *Salamlik;* and after, with her own hand, throwing over the shoulders of each of us a superb cashmere shawl, she placed us in the corner of ceremony of her sofa, and welcomed us to her house in the most flattering terms.

The room into which we were thus introduced is large, lofty, and very handsome, with one of those carved and painted ceilings peculiar to Cairo, embellished with a fine cut-glass chandelier, and having at the lower end a large arched Saracenic recess furnished with shelves, upon

which were displayed some handsome pieces of plate, and sundry beautiful vases, goblets, and decanters of Bohemian crystal. A fine Persian carpet entirely covered the *Leewan ;* the sofa and cushions are of satin brocade; and in a conspicuous place upon the wall of the upper part of the room are suspended a framed engraving of the Queen of England, and two or three other English prints of a very trivial character, but evidently objects of great admiration to their possessor, as she immediately caused them to be taken down and shown to me. At the lower end of the room I perceived the same description of iron bedstead with satin pillows and pink musquitoe nets which I had seen at Mustapha Bey's: so it would appear that this unsightly European addition to Eastern furniture is quite the fashion in the elegant hareems of Cairo.

Richly ornamented chibouques were immediately brought by the pretty slaves; then coffee in enamelled cups with gold *zarfs ;* and lastly dinner, a splendid repast served in the Turkish fashion, with the European accessories of plates, knives, silver forks, and spoons of silver, of carved ivory, and of tortoiseshell ornamented with coral. Our hostess, who is both cordial and high-bred, did

the honours of her house to admiration, selecting all the bits of fat from the various dishes (the greatest of all polite attentions in this country, but alas! to me, the greatest of all punishments!) to give me in her own fingers. The repast consisted of above twenty dishes, all delicious, (particularly the salads and the sweet things,) and alternating, first savoury and then sweet, of each of which we were compelled to taste. Two sorts of sherbet were served in large crystal vases, and perfumed water was handed to us in goblets of pale green and gold. In short, the whole service was splendid, and in perfect keeping with the manner and bearing of the lady of the house, who certainly is a fine specimen of Turkish female aristocracy, and would appear to advantage in any European society. During the course of conversation, when she heard that I had recently returned from Upper Egypt, she eagerly inquired of me whether I had seen her brother, Selim Pasha, at E'Siout. I absolutely started at the question! Could this be the beautiful sister who so strangely became her brother's bride for a few hours, as I have already recounted to you? and I looked with increased interest upon her speaking countenance, where traces of great beauty still linger,

although she has attained the age which is more than maturity in this part of the world. As soon as I could find an opportunity, I whispered my eager inquiries to Mrs. Lieder; but that lady had never heard of the romantic episode in Selim Pasha's life, and could give me no lights upon the subject. The inviolable privacy of Eastern life admits of none of those gossiping details, which in Europe lay bare the secrets of the domestic hearth to the heartless curiosity and the cold comments of the community at large; and many an incident of thrilling and even tragic interest passes here, unknown to all save the immediate actors in the scene. In a country like Egypt, where no man ventures to inquire even of his dearest friend after the health of his wife, or indeed to make any allusion to her at all in direct terms, this is easily understood, and I was therefore by no means surprised at Mrs. Lieder's ignorance of the subject I have alluded to: but in my own mind I was satisfied that our amiable hostess was no other than the beautiful Hafiza, bestowed long years ago by Mohammed Ali upon his favourite Selim as a bride; and my convictions were strengthened when I heard her speak of her brother in terms of the strongest attachment.

Before this interesting visit terminated, we were taken by the lady of the house all over the premises, where extensive alterations are in progress, which we were called upon to admire and approve of. Mohammed Ali has lately issued an order that the beautiful projecting windows of wooden lattice-work, which confer such an Arabian stamp upon the picturesque architecture of Cairo, should be removed, and replaced by European flat casements sashed and glazed. This decree has already been acted upon by many of his courtiers, and among the rest by Roustam Bey, whose wife drew our attention with evident satisfaction to the graceless windows which have replaced the Meshrebeeyeh and their gorgeous accompaniments of stained glass, in the splendid reception-hall of the Bey. One of the pieces of furniture pointed out to us in another room was a splendid Psyche glass, evidently manufactured in Europe, and presented to Roustam Bey's wife by Mohammed Ali. The feet of it are ormolu sphinxes, obelisks of the same material form the sides, and upon the summit are represented the great Pyramids of Ghizeh beautifully executed.

When at last we bade our charming entertainer adieu, she conducted us herself to the

bottom of the hareem stair-case, and there, kissing us upon both cheeks, and then upon both shoulders, entreated us to repeat the visit as soon as possible, courteously assuring us that the sight of us had strewn flowers in her path.

During these two visits to the hareem, I became initiated into two or three points of Egyptian etiquette, which, as they may serve as useful hints to you should you ever visit this country, I shall herewith specify. In the first place, it is considered a mark of ill-breeding to cast aside the cashmere shawl that is thrown over your shoulders on the occasion of a first visit to a hareem, and which is symbolical of the mantle of hospitality being spread over and enveloping you, once and for ever. Be the weather ever so warm, and your clothing more than complete, do not hazard your reputation for courtesy by allowing this garment of welcome to drop from your shoulders until the moment when your visit is about to terminate.

In the second place, each time that refreshments, such as coffee or sherbet, are offered to you, it is indispensable, before partaking of them, that you should turn towards the lady of the hareem, and salute her by carrying your hand to your heart and head: and, in sipping your

tiny cup of coffee, be careful to imbibe it with as much noise as possible; a proceeding which, although a proof of abominable vulgarity according to our ideas, is the *ne plus ultra* of politeness here, as it is considered to convey an eulogy of the quality of the coffee. When the refreshments consist of sweetmeats and iced water, restrict yourself to one spoonful of the former, and one mouthful of the latter, for *more* would ruin your reputation as a person of breeding in the opinion of your entertainers. At dinner, where your fingers are expected to do the duty of knives, forks, and spoons, you must never by any chance touch any of the viands with your left hand; an abomination, nay, an insult, not to be forgiven by Moslems of any class.

And lastly, should your admiration of any person or thing in an Egyptian house resolve itself into words, do not fail to temper your praise with some pious ejaculation in Arabic; for otherwise, instead of gratifying your hosts, you will leave them with a sense of injury directed by you towards them, and an impression on their minds that the curse of the Evil Eye must fall upon whatever you have eulogized.

On the occasion of both of the abovementioned visits, I directed my Dragoman to give

two dollars to the chief eunuch of each of the hareems,—a gratuity which is always expected in a country where *bachshish* forms the pith and marrow of every transaction, be it social or commercial. To show you to what an absurd degree this system is carried, I must tell you that one day when I had dismounted from my donkey at old Cairo to visit some monument there, a pretty little kid ran up to me, and, in the fulness of my love of animals, I raised it in my arms and kissed it. An Arab immediately approached me, and holding out his hand stoutly demanded "*Bachshish!*" I inquired, for what? and was very gravely answered, *for having kissed the kid, which belonged to him!*

But an anecdote related to me by Doctor Abbott is still more delicious. He had been called in to attend in his medical capacity upon an Egyptian lady during a long illness, and had done so with all the skill and kindness for which he is noted, but without having received a fee during the whole period. Of course he naturally expected that the usual remuneration would be forthcoming at the close of his attendance; and accordingly, when in his last visit he saw the lady hold out her hand to him, he supposed that it contained the reward of his labours. Not at

all! the action was accompanied by a demand on her part for *Bachshish* from the doctor for having allowed herself to be cured by him!!

* * * * *

About seven miles from Cairo, in the Valley of the Wanderings, which forms the commencement of the Desert leading to the Red Sea, is a curious natural phenomenon which no traveller in Egypt fails to visit, and none as yet, I believe, has been able to account for. I allude to the desert tract known by the name of the Petrified Forest, although not a single tree remains standing there; but the sands, for several miles around, are strewed with fragments of wood, converted by some wonderful convulsion of the elements into agates and flints, which retain all the knots, veins, fibres, and even the rough coating of bark that characterized them in their vegetable state. At the distance of four miles from the commencement of the forest, some of these wonderful petrifactions are to be seen in the shape of trunks of trees, measuring about sixty feet in length, lying prostrate on the sand, having, to all appearance, snapped asunder in many places in their fall, as the different fragments are severed but not separated from each other. It has been

generally asserted that the roots of all these trees point towards the Red Sea, and the summits towards Egypt, as though a hurricane or inundation from the former direction had uprooted and prostrated them. But this is not exactly the case, and a certain chaotic confusion among the fragments shows that the shock which overthrew them produced less regularity than has thus been attributed to it.

At some remote period, therefore, it is evident that the desert tract, which does not now produce a blade of grass, was covered with waving forests; but what awful and mysterious caprice of Nature transmuted those towering trunks into stone, and converted the once fertile soil into a barren waste? The mind becomes bewildered in endeavouring to resolve this question; we have no data to go by—no chronicle exists which alludes to this mighty transformation! For myself, in ignorant humility, I dared not even to form a suggestion concerning the *cause*, and contented myself with wondering at, and admiring, the *effects*, while I collected some specimens of agatized wood to add to the little store of tangible *souvenirs* of my wanderings in the Land of Egypt which I have already amassed. The ride to the Petrified Forest is a very agreeable

one, provided there be not sufficient wind to raise the sandy soil over which one's donkeys amble. The way lies through the tombs of the Memlook Sultans, those exquisite Arabian monuments. which are, alas! crumbling so fast into decay that another century will, in all probability, behold them prostrate in the sands, like the mutilated petrifactions I have just been describing to you; and the air of the desert is so bracing and invigorating at this season of the year, when the dreaded *Khamseen* * is yet far off, that one always returns from inhaling it refreshed in body and mind.

* The Khamseen is the suffocating south wind charged with sand from the Great Deserts of Africa, which prevails in Egypt during the spring and early summer months.

CHAPTER VI.

MOSQUES.—EGYPTIAN DRESS.—EL HHASSANEYN.—EL AZHAR..—FANTASIA.—CONTEMPLATED DEPARTURE.—SOCIETY AT CAIRO.—SHEIKH AHMED.—

Cairo, Feb. 11, 1846.

YESTERDAY I achieved a rash undertaking,—no less a one than going into the mosques of El Azhar and Hhassaneyn, both of them so sacred to the Moslems that Christians are forbidden to enter them under pain of death; and, until within the last few years, were not suffered even to pass before them without incurring the same penalty. There was only one way of obtaining admission, and that was by putting on the Mahometan dress, and passing myself off for an Egyptian woman, with the risk staring me in the face, that should the fraud be discovered, Mohammed, who was to accompany me, would be the first victim sacrificed to the popular fury and prejudice. This startling alternative, impressed upon me by more than one resident in Cairo,

nearly made me relinquish the attempt; for although my dragoman protested that he had no fears on the subject, and that he would incur any risk to oblige his employers, I felt that I had no right to expose him to a peril so great as that of a Moslem being detected in smuggling a Christian woman into the most sacred sanctuary of Mahometanism. However, he showed such confidence in the thing being feasible, and some of my friends were so urgent for me to attempt it, that what with their encouragement and my own curiosity, I at last consented.

Mrs. Lieder kindly lent me an entire Caireen costume, and Mohammed brought one of his female relations to dress me and accompany me to the mosques. Being the first time I ever put on the Egyptian dress, I felt very awkward in it, as it really requires some practice, and not a little dexterity, to retain all the outer mufflings (consisting of the *tob*, or loose gown worn over the indoor clothing, the *boorko*, or face veil, and the *hhabarah*, or overall of black silk, which completely envelopes the person), in a state of decorous propriety. This difficulty was increased by my being obliged to mount the *hhomar alee*, or the " high ass," in the Egyptian fashion, that is, astride upon a very high large saddle covered

with a *seggadeh* or prayer-carpet, and thus ride through the whole city to the entrance of the mosques; a *sais* or groom walking at one side of me, my female attendant at the other, and Mohammed bringing up the rear. Fortunately my face could not betray my apprehensions, as it was covered to the eyes with the Egyptian face-veil; and this, together with the knowledge that no man dare accost a Mahometan woman in the streets, gave me a feeling of security that enabled me to proceed steadily onwards, and I reached the mosque of Hhassaneyn without any other accident than that of having dropped the yellow slippers worn by me over my *khoof* (or yellow Morocco boots) above a dozen times: they were, however, always picked up, and dexterously restored to my feet by one or other of my attendants, without any awkward delay ensuing which might have compromised my incognito.

Arrived at the gate of El Hhassaneyn, I dismounted, and, leaving my slippers at the outer door, entered boldly with my female attendant; Mohammed following at a distance, so as to appear not to belong to me, as it is not customary in Mahometan countries for men to accompany women when they go to a place of worship, but keeping me in sight, so as to be able to come to

my assistance should anything unpleasant have occurred. The mosque was quite full; Tuesday being the day on which the howling dervishes perform their strange rites in it. We first directed our steps towards the *Ckoobbeh*, or saloon of the tomb, containing the shrine that encloses the head of the martyr, El Hhasseyn (the grandson of the Prophet); and following the example of my companion, I bowed my forehead against the bronze screen that surrounds it, and kissed the handle of the door; after which we seated ourselves upon the ground among the women, in the part adjacent to the shrine where they congregate to pray. After remaining there some time we proceeded to the body of the mosque where the men pray, and in the centre of which the howling dervishes were performing their *zikr*. About forty of them placed in a ring held each other by the hands, and swaying themselves from side to side, shouted "Allah hoo hai," until by degrees their movements became so violent, and their excitement so great, that many of them foamed at the mouth, and some fell down in epilepsy. Several soldiers and other fanatics joined them, and soon became quite as mad and noisy as themselves; but we dared not remain any length of time near the dervishes, as no

women were in that part of the mosque; so after walking entirely through the building, we returned to the *Ckoobbeh,* again pressed our foreheads against the screen of the tomb, and then departed.

The mosque of El Hhassaneyn is the most sacred of all the religious edifices of Cairo, on account of the holy relic it contains; but in point of architectural merit, it is not to be compared to the mosque of Sultan Hassan. The floors are covered with Persian carpets, and the shrine enclosing the martyr's head appeared to me, as well as I could distinguish through the open work of the screen, and in the obscure light that prevails in the *Ckoobbeh,* to be covered with platings either of gold or of gilt metal. Small lamps are suspended by wires under the dome, as in all other Mahometan places of worship, and ostrich eggs, the symbol of the resurrection, are interspersed among them. There was no preaching going on, but there appeared to be a fair division of praying and conversation among the many persons assembled there. On going out as well as going in, I was beset by the water-venders that congregate about the doors of mosques, in order to beg for money from all well-dressed people, under the pretext of distributing cups of

water *gratis* to the poor. My attendant gave them a piece of money for me, and I was then suffered to mount my donkey and to depart in peace for the mosque of El Azhar.

This mosque, (the name of which signifies the "Splendid Mosque," and not, as has erroneously been stated, the "Mosque of Flowers,") may be termed the University of the East, for in the numerous Colleges attached to it are educated all the youths destined in this part of the world for the priesthood and the profession of the law, which are always combined in Mahometan countries, where he who best understands the Koran is the best lawyer. Formerly El Azhar sent out its pupils throughout the whole of Africa and part of Asia, and it contains separate colleges under the same roof for the natives of the different provinces of Egypt, or of other Mahometan nations who come to study there, and pay nothing for the instruction they receive. But the number of these has greatly diminished since Mohammed Ali seized upon the cultivable lands that belonged to the mosques, which in the case of El Azhar, formed a considerable portion of its revenues. It now contains from one to two thousand students, three hundred of whom form a college of the blind, which is maintained from

funds bequeathed for that purpose by pious Moslems.

The mosque is situated in the very heart of the city, and in such a labyrinth of thickly populated and narrow streets that no good view of its exterior is to be obtained from any side. It has five entrances, the principal one leading into the vast court paved with marble, which we found full of students, seated upon the pavement in little groups, and studying with their professors. I confess that I trembled as I walked through them, and fancied that every one who looked up at me would discover, from the colour of my eyes and the absence of *khol* round them, that I was an European, and, even an Englishwoman;—but nothing of the sort happened, and I got safely into the interior of the mosque. Its great space, and the innumerable quantity of low slender columns with which it is supported, spreading in all directions like a forest, reminded me of the descriptions I have read of the Moorish Mosque of Cordova; but there is no great beauty in El Azhar beyond that which magnitude and airiness produce. We seated ourselves at the foot of one of the columns, and I there made the best use I could of my eyes.

The interior of the mosque was quite as full

as the great court, and the groups were highly characteristic and exceedingly picturesque; the base of each column being surrounded by a little turbaned conclave deep in either the study of, or dissertations on, the Koran. Some with their eyes half closed, listened in a state of dreamy beatitude; others rocked themselves to and fro, or wagged their heads, as is common for Mahometans to do when engaged in religious practices. Several cats sat by their masters, and looked as solemn and as orthodox as they did: and I am certain, could they have suspected my identity, would have scratched my eyes out for the fraud I was practising upon the followers of the Prophet. In the spaces between the columns hundreds were engaged in their solitary devotions, and very many were stretched fast asleep upon the matting; the Korans, which had thus effectually transported them to the land of dreams, lying by their sides. A very few women were in the mosque, but just sufficient to prevent the presence of myself and my attendant appearing singular.

After sitting some time at the foot of my column, while Mohammed, stationed at another one within sight of me, said his prayers, I made the circuit of the mosque, and then departed by

the great court, and the principal entrance, where I had deposited my slippers,—very glad to effect my exit undiscovered, and unable to breathe freely until I had placed several streets between the great hot-bed of Moslem fanaticism and my infidel self—unable indeed even to laugh at the clever way in which I had *done* the grave Ulemas and Moollahs of Cairo, under their very beards!

Just as I reached the door of my Hotel, I was waylaid by Colonel Mari, a French officer in the Egyptian service, and first Aide-de-camp to Achmet Pasha, Minister of War, who had been deputed by Madame Z., a Greek lady, and wife of the Belgian Consul-General, to invite me to a Fantasia which had just been improvised at her house. So little time was there to be lost, that he would not even hear of my going upstairs to resume my European dress: and accordingly I was obliged to turn my donkey's head towards the Esbekieh, where Madame Z.'s house is situated.

There we found a circle of Levantine ladies assembled to meet the daughter of the last Dey of Algiers, who lives in this country, and is possessed of enormous wealth, chiefly in precious stones, which she sells one by one as her expenditures necessitate, instead of having disposed of

them in a lot, and placed the produce out at interest,—but such is eastern management! She is a Turkish woman, of course, and was married just before her father's deposition to a favourite slave of the Dey's, who had been brought up and enriched by that barbarous old pirate. The husband is now absent at Algiers, looking after the property which the French government permits his wife still to retain there; and the lady is one of the notabilities of the Caireen hareems, but is looked upon as somewhat flighty, or, to render myself more intelligible, not always perfectly sane in her intellects.

The Dey's daughter was accompanied by her son, a fine boy apparently thirteen or fourteen years of age, her two little girls, splendidly dressed in the Turkish fashion with large diamond agraffes in their girdles and Fez caps, her dancing woman, her singing woman, and two female Abyssinian slaves. She is a very remarkable looking person, but her countenance is by no means prepossessing; and the cloudy expression of her sombre blue eyes is rendered more sinister by the painted eyebrows meeting over them, and the deep border of *khollyrium* by which they are enriched. She wears *rouge* admirably well applied, and the details of her dress were exceedingly

costly, and in the most approved Turkish fashion.

Her ghawazee, who is neither handsome nor graceful, was performing when I arrived; and, by the audacious licentiousness of her exhibition, completely disgusted me. She exceeded in cynical pantomime all that I have yet seen practised by these *artistes* (the effect, no doubt, of a bottle of Burgundy which she had already emptied), and I know not which was the most revolting, her dancing, or her maudlin, tipsy singing, half tears, and half smiles, but certainly *not* all melody. She was formerly one of the public ghawazee of Cairo, but her performance possessed so many charms for the Dey's daughter that she took her into her household, and has loaded her with jewels, and pays no visits without being accompanied by her. The nymph had on a splendid pearl necklace and diamond ear-rings presented to her by her mistress on the late occasion of the princess's marriage; and whenever she performs any particularly audacious feat in dancing she is rewarded by her with similar gifts. Madame Mari was lamenting to me during the whole performance that such jewels should be thrown away upon such an "*animale Arabe*," as she indignantly termed her; and verily the Bayadère merited the epithet in the

fullest sense of the word. The Dey's daughter spoke to no one but to this her especial favourite, whom she further honoured by allowing her to smoke out of her own *narghilé ;* and the ghawazee never scrupled to snatch it from her mistress's lips whenever her fancy prompted her to pause in the dance and refresh herself with a puff.

This odious exhibition lasted nearly two hours, and would have thoroughly exhausted my patience had I not been able occasionally to take refuge from it in the agreeable conversation of some of the Levantine ladies assembled, who all spoke either French or Italian. At last it terminated: —the fair Algerine and her suite departed; I quickly followed her example, and was delighted on getting home to jump out of my yellow boots and cherry-coloured trowsers, and to resume the garb and semblance of a Christian woman.

This will be the last letter that you will receive from me from Cairo; for on the 14th, I grieve to say, we are to take our departure for Alexandria, from thence to embark for Marseilles. Had my friends in Europe only followed my directions, and have written to me regularly by the Marseilles mails, I should certainly have turned my head in another direction; and after waiting here for the return of the caravan with the hajj (pil-

grims) from Mecca, which takes place next month, and is attended with great solemnities and rejoicing, I should have betaken myself to the Great Desert on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. But the intolerable suspense and anxiety into which the irregularity of my correspondents has thrown me is no longer to be borne, and I must go and obtain in person the intelligence which those most dear to me have failed to send me. Now this is provoking, but it is inevitable ; for as I do not possess the philosophy that wraps itself up in the comfortable conviction of "no news being good news," I shrink from the idea of dragging after me a lengthening chain of anxiety into more remote regions.

Still, I shall quit Cairo with reluctance, and with many regrets, not merely for the place itself, but for some of the persons it contains, by whom much kindness has been shown to me, and with whom many pleasant hours have been passed. Some of them I may hope to see in Europe, but others are more exclusively bound to the East, and the chances are against my ever meeting them again. I only wish they could understand that the sole drawback to the pleasure their acquaintance has conferred upon me has been the knowledge that I must so soon relinquish it.

There is some charming society among the European residents in Cairo, although it is necessarily restricted to a very few families ; but the hospitable houses of our own Consul-General, Colonel Barnett, and of the French Consul-General, Monsieur Barrot, and his lovely and accomplished English wife, would in themselves be sufficient to render any place agreeable. Besides the constant influx of European travellers bound for Upper Egypt and Syria, there is a considerable sprinkling of Indian officers always located in Cairo, who come here to pass their sick leave, by which arrangement they obviate the law which curtails their pay as soon as they set foot in Europe. And this winter Shepheard's Hotel (their favourite resort, and certainly for English persons a more desirable residence than the more magnificent but most comfortless French hotel in the Esbekieh), has been inhabited by a select little circle of most agreeable and gentlemanlike men. There have also been some *savants* and literary men from other parts of the globe, among whom I must particularize Mr. Finlay, of Athens (who for years has devoted himself to the regeneration of Greece), the talented author of "Greece under the Romans," a work of the deepest research and merit; and Mr. Paton, better known

as "The Oriental Student," who is following up his "Modern Syrians" by a work upon Cairo, which will no doubt prove to be an equally acceptable addition to our literature.

While I was writing the above, I was interrupted by a visit from one of the living curiosities of Cairo, Sheikh Ahmed, whom Mr. Lane has rendered familiar to the reading public by the account contained in his "Modern Egyptians" of his extraordinary propensity for devouring glass lamps, when under the dominion of occasional fits of religious frenzy, and which caused him to be expelled from two orders of Dervishes to which he belonged. Sheikh Ahmed is said to have quite relinquished this strange appetite, having made a solemn vow to that effect, and he now quietly follows his original avocation of a bookseller, and in that capacity is much respected, notwithstanding his eccentricities. He is now well stricken in years, quite blind of one eye, and almost so of the other, and of so fair a complexion that no one would suppose him to be an Egyptian. He told me that Mr. Lane had caused more money to flow into his exchequer than his own calling alone would ever have done. "For," said he, "no English travellers ever pass through Cairo without asking to see Sheikh Ahmed; and they always

buy one book at least out of my shop, and pay me well for it."

The Sheikh was very anxious that I should go and dine in his hareem, but his motives for pressing me to do so were more *naive* than *adroit*: "The dinner will cost me very little," he urged; "fowls are only one *piastre* a piece, rice is very cheap, and I have plenty of butter in the house!" Not having, however, a day to spare, I excused myself; and the gentleman who brought Sheikh Ahmed to see me congratulated me on my decision, telling me that as the kind-hearted bookseller's house is a complete refuge for the destitute, and the asylum of all the stray cats and dogs in Cairo, it abounds in fleas more than any other habitation in the city, and I should inevitably bring away with me a whole colony of that lively gentry. I was warned to refrain from any allusion to the glass-eating feats of which Sheikh Ahmed is said to be now heartily ashamed; yet I thought I could detect his half-closed one eye tenderly ogling a large cut crystal smelling-bottle which stood upon my table, and which I would gladly have sacrificed to have beheld him *croquer* it like a mouthful of sugar-candy. He, however, made no move towards it, and although I was dying to say to him, "Can I offer you any refreshment?

Pray taste that excellent glass bottle?" I dared not.

When he took his leave, the irrepressible spirit of the Arab broke forth. He had got half-way down the staircase when he suddenly turned round, and running back to my room asked me if I had not got an old handkerchief, or a riband, or a pair of gloves, or, in short, *anything* to give him as a *souvenir* of me! I gratified him by rummaging in my drawers and giving him some trifle from thence; and after thrusting it into his bosom, kissing my hand, and then carrying it to his forehead, he departed in high glee, chuckling to the gentleman who had introduced him, "Now when that lady either speaks or writes of me to her friends in England, she will be sure to say, Sheikh Ahmed is a beggarly old fellow!"

ADIEU!

CHAPTER VII.

DEPARTURE FOR ALEXANDRIA.—ALEXANDRIA.—DROMEDARY.—ARRIVAL AT BEYROUT.—LAZARET.—SYRIAN SUNSET.—THE MARONITES.—THE DRUSES.—EMIR BESCHIR.—WAR IN THE LEBANON.—MARONITE PRINCES.—ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON.—BEYROUT.—SYRIAN COSTUME.—THE TANTOUR.—PREPARATIONS FOR PALESTINE.—RAIN.

Beyrout, March 14, 1846.

We bade adieu to dear Cairo on the 16th of last month, intending, as I told you in my last, to embark from Alexandria for Marseilles direct; but on our reaching the former place we were met by those letters from Europe, the non-advent of which at Cairo had caused us to accelerate our return homewards, but which having at last reached us, and being fortunately of a nature to leave us at liberty to resume our former plan of visiting Syria and the Holy Land, we at once decided upon embarking in the French steamer that was to leave Alexandria on the 24th of February, for Beyrout. And, although that manner of proceeding to Syria is less desirable than the route

from Cairo by the Desert, El Arish, and Gaza, (as there is no possibility of approaching Syria by sea from Egypt, without being subject to quarantine, which is not the case by land, and that the road from Beyrout to the Holy Land, which follows the coast down to Jaffa, is far more exposed to peril and privation than that by the Desert), yet we were willing to brave *all*, rather than turn our backs upon the East without having visited Palestine. Besides, we were assured that we should obtain permission to perform our nine days' quarantine at Beyrout in a detached house beyond the limits of the Lazaret, and that we should be allowed all sorts of liberty, even extending to riding about the country under the *surveillance* of an officer of the Sanità.

The intervening week between our arrival at, and departure from, Alexandria was passed by us so agreeably that time appeared to fly away upon the wings of the wind. The hospitable mansion of Mr. Galloway was a home to us, and his unceasing kindness and the cordial attentions of still more recent acquaintances made us forget that we were in a land of strangers. In short, we quitted Alexandria with regret, and with recollections of some of its European residents which are never to be effaced. Among the

gratifications procured for me there, was that of riding upon a dromedary; a recreation which I had been longing to encompass ever since I had been in Egypt, but which I had never hitherto been able to accomplish. Mr. Tibaldi possesses a magnificent dromedary, the gift of the Viceroy; and one day that I was visiting Mrs. Tibaldi at their charming country-house on the Mahmoudieh canal, they caused it to be caparisoned for me to ride, and very much, I assure you, I enjoyed the exercise. The walking pace is disagreeable and fatiguing, but the long trot is absolutely delightful; and then one is carried over the ground so fast, and one feels so indescribably grand, perched up at such a height on a crimson velvet saddle, from whence depend costly and grotesque draperies of gold and silver stuffs streaming at all sides, and intermingled with silken cords, and loops, and tassells, that, I think, were I to live in Egypt, I should forswear horses and donkeys, and never condescend to mount anything lower than a dromedary's hump.

On the 24th of February we embarked in the Sesostris, and, after a fine passage of forty hours, were landed at Beyrout; but imagine our dismay when we were greeted by the intelligence, that on that very day orders had been received from

Constantinople for the quarantine between Egypt and Syria to be prolonged to fifteen days, and that the Lazaret having recently undergone a thorough repair, the whole period of our purification must be passed within its walls! To inquire the why and the wherefore in a country where misgovernment prevails, would have been wasting our breath to little purpose. Some thought that the rumour of a man having died on board a ship under suspicious circumstances, had caused this rigorous measure,—others, that it was merely an ostentatious display on the part of the Porte to show its rapid progress in civilization, which would entitle them to obtain a relaxation of the sanitary laws towards Turkish vessels in European ports. But whatever the cause might be, we could not evade the effects; we were marched into the Lazaret, and indulgently informed that we might make our selection of lodgings among the numerous chambers it contains.

It would scarcely be possible to give you an idea of the utter wretchedness of this building. The position is beautiful; on a cliff overlooking the whole roadstead of Beyrout, and commanding an admirable view to the right of the magnificent range of the Lebanon, with its snowy crests,

which reminded me of the mountains of Granada; and on the left the city of Beyrout, seen to great advantage at that distance, its terraced roofs and cactus groves masking the misery of its internal appearance. But the rooms that were to be our asylum for the next fifteen days! No cow-house in England was ever half so comfortless; and we looked with shuddering upon their earthen floors, their mud-walls partially smeared over with white-wash, and their unglazed windows only defended from the winds of heaven by ill-joined and unpainted shutters, so that in cases of storm or rain, the dwellers within must choose between remaining exposed to the fury of the elements, or shutting themselves up in utter darkness.

We had brought with us letters of introduction to Mr. Moore, the English consul at Beyrout, and we lost no time in writing to him in his official capacity, entreating that he would use his mediation with the Turkish authorities to soften the rigours of our captivity—at least that he would obtain for us permission to pass the period of it in some habitation less likely to prove injurious to our health than the Lazaret, *as had always hitherto been the case* with travellers coming from Egypt; and that we would cheerfully pay the rent of any private house that

might be allotted to us. A couple of hours brought a most polite answer from him, stating that he had immediately submitted our application to the Turkish director of the Sanità, but without effect; for that the orders just received from Constantinople were so positive and arbitrary as to admit of no infraction. Nothing, then, was left for us but to practise the Christian virtue of resignation with the best grace we could command; we had our own beds with us, and having procured from Bianchi's hotel in the town a few articles of furniture and a Maltese cook, we (to adopt the figurative language of Hadji Baba) "seated ourselves upon the hill of patience, and opened the eyes of astonishment upon the prospect of novelty."

We were not "alone in our glory"—or rather our misery—for the Sesostris had also brought to Beyrout some French Pères Lazaristes, coming from Constantinople to visit the establishment belonging to their order at Antoura in the Lebanon, and one or two European merchants established at Alexandria. These gentlemen, equal sufferers with ourselves, made most strenuous representations to the French consul for some amelioration of their captivity, but with as little success as we had done; we found the

Turkish director a perfect Shylock, determined to exact the smallest pairing of his pound of flesh, and little caring whether his victims bled to death or not under the operation; and, although Giovanni, the Maltese overseer of the Lazaret, repeatedly assured me in his broken English that his Excellency was "such a nice gentleman—*so* kind—*most sweet!*" I could not find it in my heart to echo the sentiment. At last one day he announced that the Turk had come to pay us a visit, and out we went to receive him in the large grass enclosure appertaining to the establishment, where we were allowed to walk and to receive visits; our guardians standing by with long sticks to prevent any contact, and Giovanni acting as master of the ceremonies and interpreter. After the usual *salaaming*, compliments, and inquiries, in which we of course took care to introduce complaints of our comfortless position, a long parley in Turkish ensued between the director and Giovanni; we augured well for ourselves from the countenances of both, which we watched with intense anxiety as they spoke, and still better when Giovanni turning to us with a smile, which seemed all made up of honey and sugar-candy, began: "His Excellency *such* a pleasant gentle-

man—he *so* good-natured! he wish to do everything to make you happy!" (our hearts beat with expectation), "he say the Lazaret so fine — so well repaired—such a many beautiful rooms!—*he give you leave to change your rooms every day if you like!*"

To the misery of our cold damp chambers was added a worse plague; the clay walls were alive with legions of fleas, which beset us the moment we lay down in our beds, and gave us no quarter until we rose again from our sleepless pillows. Never did I suffer so much as from this irritating visitation; but no relief, not even a temporary cessation of hostilities, was to be obtained; and, although we contrived to capture many of the enemy, they appeared to increase their forces daily.

But then there was compensation in the beautiful weather, and in the lovely sun-set evenings, which the wondrous limpidity of the atmosphere in these climes invests with a magic colouring unknown in Europe; and what grandeur, and beauty, and interest in the prospect around, and in the union of mountain and sea spread like a glorious picture before us! The Mediterranean, blue as ultra-marine, its waves appearing to become crested with gold as the sun slowly

sunk in the western horizon, and left the sky flooded with deepest amber;—the eternal snows of antique Lebanon flushed with bright roseate hues caught from the reflexion of its last vanishing rays, and gradually paling, as though with sorrow for their departure, until the virgin white became tinted with death-like blue, and cut coldly and sharply against the deepening gloom of approaching night; while the base of the mountain assumed first a vapourish green hue, then violet, then grey, and at last became shrouded from our eyes in indistinctness. The aspect of Mount Lebanon at sunset, when every moment thus produces some marvellous change in the colouring reflected from the skies upon its rugged sides and snowy crest, is enough to drive an artist mad with delight, or with despair!

You may imagine that we looked with reverence and interest upon that antique region, which has been rendered sacred ground by its Biblical associations, and among whose steep ascents and wild valleys is sheltered the largest Christian population in Syria. The Maronites, as they are called, derive their name from Maron, a hermit of the fifth century, whose followers two hundred years later, amidst the schisms of the early Christian church, were condemned for heresy. To

avoid persecution, they fled from the cities of Syria into the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, districts separated by the plain of the Bekaa, the ancient Cœlo-Syria, which became a refuge for the various persecuted sects that abounded at that time. There they took root and flourished, forming a people apart, governed by their own princes, but tributary to the sovereign possessor of Syria and amenable to his laws. The Maronites follow, with some very slight difference, the rites of the Catholic church; they celebrate the mass in the old Syriac language, of which they understand not one word, and the Gospel alone is read in Arabic, They indulge in the belief of the most vague and preposterous legends, and assert among other things that the tombs of Moses and of Noah are both in their territory.

The remaining population of the Lebanon consists of Druses, who are not Christians, and are——nobody knows what, for none have yet been able to penetrate the secret of their religion. All their outward observances and habits of life are Moslem, but their faith consists in mysteries that nothing will induce them to reveal. A tradition exists that they derive their origin from the rebellious portion of the Jews, who, during the Exodus, turned against the law

of God and worshipped the golden calf. But a more historical and authentic account of them would ascribe the origin of the Druse religion to a sect of Mahometans, who substituted the name of their favourite leader (Hakem Bi-Amr-Allah, the third Fatemite Caliph of Egypt) as their prophet, instead of Mahomet.* The Druses were under the subjection of the Maronite princes until within the last few years, and although an old feudal struggle for superiority existed between these mountaineers, sharpened by a still more infallible cause of discord—religious hatred—they contrived to adhere to the Maronite supremacy until the political crisis of which I must now treat.

Emir Beschir, who is now eighty-four years old, reigned very nearly despotically over both the Maronites and the Druses of Lebanon, from the year 1804 until 1840, when the political events of Syria called upon him to take a decided part, one way or the other, in the great question then pending between the Turks and the Egyptians. To extricate himself from this difficulty he claimed the protection of Admiral Stopford at Beyrout, by whom he was taken to Malta;

* Mr. Paton has given a very interesting account of that insane tyrant, and of his followers, in "The Modern Syrians."

after which he went to Constantinople, from whence he was sent into a sort of honourable exile into Anatolia, where he now lives in great poverty.

The Emir Beschir's career has been a remarkable one. He is descended from a Druse family, but early in life adopted the faith of the Maronite Christians; more, it is supposed, as a measure of consolidating his power, than from any religious convictions. Indeed, he has been accused of always preserving in his inmost heart Mahometan principles and preferences; although to profess them would have been incompatible with the sovereignty he exercised in the Lebanon, where the population are exclusively Maronites and Druses, in the proportion of three-fifths of the former to two-fifths of the latter. To a certain degree he was an usurper, for he succeeded to his uncle to the prejudice and exclusion of his cousins who were very numerous, and whom he managed to get rid of in various ways, causing the tongues of some of them to be cut out, and the eyes of others to be put out! some of these mutilated victims, I am told are still living, but of course have never inspired terror to any party.

In his usurpation, the Emir Beschir was as-

sisted by a wonderful, but most barbarous individual, Djezzar Pasha, the butcher defender of Acre, to whom such means of success were congenial, and in whose Pashalik the little sovereignty was situated. It was on the occasion of the Maronite prince going in 1804 to solicit Djezzar Pasha's support, that he afforded one of the grounds for its being supposed that he leaned towards Mahometanism: for while he was awaiting in fearful anxiety, the decision of that capricious and sanguinary tyrant, which might either cost him his head or raise him to the dignity of a Sovereign Prince, his apprehensions were converted into triumph by finding the Kaftan of office placed upon his shoulders. Djezzar Pasha was at that moment proceeding to the mosque, and under the impulse of gratitude, the Emir Beschir followed him there, and prostrating himself beside his patron, performed all the observances of the Moslem faith. However, to have persevered in such a course would have been impossible in his new position, and he returned to his mountain territory to rule over it as a Christian prince, tributary to the Porte in appearance, but in reality perfectly independent.

His leaving the country in 1840 was the

signal for the Druses to rise *en masse* against their fellow-subjects, the Maronites, and a state of civil war and horrible carnage ensued, which became so lamentable that in 1842 the European Powers interfered, and the Porte undertook the pacification of the Lebanon, by giving to each population local magistrates of their own persuasion, and depriving both parties of supremacy. This plan might have succeeded had all the villages been confined exclusively to one race! but some of them have a mixed population of Maronites and Druses; and to expect that the Druse magistrates would faithfully and equitably co-operate with the Maronite authorities would have been to look for that which never yet has been found in human nature, when rival interests and ambitions clash. The consequence was that fresh discords and massacres ensued, in which the Druses obtained a complete mastery over the Maronites, and, it is said, indulged in the most dreadful excesses; it is also said that they were encouraged by the Turks, not only from their hatred of the Maronite Christians, but in the hope of securing to themselves the alliance of a powerful and warlike people against the Christian population, who were partizans of, and openly regretted, the recent domination of the Egyptians.

In consequence of the horrid scenes which became of daily occurrence in the Lebanon, the Sultan's government has again, during the course of the last year, interfered, and adopted the more summary process of disarming both parties, and taking the law into its own hands. For this purpose Chekib Effendi was sent from Constantinople to direct the course of affairs, with power to call in the army of Arabia under Namik Pasha to enforce his acts. Both of those officials are now in Beyrout, and for the present tranquillity is restored; but it is the tranquillity of gunpowder, which is perfectly quiet until the match is applied to it.

European politics have been kept on the alert by these measures. Turkey is supposed to be supported by England in an underhand partiality for the Druses in the present crisis, while France, assuming a championlike position for the Maronites, would, apparently, fain take advantage of the exclusion she was obliged to endure from the Allied Powers in 1840, by now asserting her right to act singly in favour of the Christian populations of Lebanon. Indeed, Monsieur Guizot declared last year, that he conceived there were no other means of pacifying the Lebanon than by establishing the ancient Christian Government

there; and that he should ever hold himself at liberty to enforce this upon the Divan of Constantinople, without reference to, or without requiring the coöperation of, any other Christian power.

Two days before we quitted the Lazaret, the French steamer brought upwards of thirty Maronites to Beyrout, consisting of five princes and their suites, all of them connections of the exiled Emir Beschir. In the recent warfare they were compelled to fly to save their lives, and having obtained a passage in a French brig bound for Alexandria, they proceeded to Egypt, and passed the last seven months at Cairo. They have now returned to their devastated properties, where ruin and desolation will stare them in the face; for in the feudal war that raged in the mountains, the Druses destroyed the mulberry plantations which constitute the sole value of Maronite property, as silk is the entire source of their wealth. In this sanguinary struggle the greatest courage and humanity were displayed by Colonel Rose, the English Consul-General for Syria, who frequently rode up at night into those parts of the mountain which were the theatre of the greatest outrages by fire and sword, attended only by his Ghawasses;

and by his personal influence and firmness put a stop to the massacre and rapine that were going on. His diplomatic exertions have since been no less successfully employed in bringing about and maintaining the calm which has succeeded to that period of frightful excitement.

During the two days that we remained in the Lazaret, after the returned exiles had been shut up there, it was quite affecting to witness the crowds of Maronites that came to visit them; albeit they could only communicate at the distance of several paces from each other,—but their gestures were full of meaning, and there was sadness as well as joy in their greetings. Among them were several priests, and some members of the princes' families; and of these latter, a man with a bandage over his eyes, was pointed out to me as one of those cousins of the Emir Beschir whom he had so barbarously caused to be blinded.

On the twelfth, our prison doors were opened, and with a joy that I can only compare to that of a wild bird escaping from the cage into which some rude school-boy has thrust him, we mounted the horses that had been sent by Bianchi for us, and rode into Beyrout. The Lazaret is upwards of two miles from the town, and the road

is execrable; partly hedged in with impenetrable fences of cactus, partly by high banks covered with a profusion of the loveliest wild flowers, many of them species which in England are only to be found in our greenhouses. A spot was pointed out to us as being the place where St. George slew the Dragon; but as I had, a few years ago, seen on the banks of the Danube near the frontier of Turkey, a cave which tradition assigns as the theatre of the same event, I looked with something of a suspicious eye upon the actual locality.

The entrance to Beyrout is mean and miserable, and the interior, like all Turkish towns, is composed of a labyrinth of narrow dirty streets or rather lanes, and an exceedingly ill-supplied and paltry-looking bazaar. The houses, unlike the mud-built edifices of Egypt, are constructed of stone and have flat terraced roofs, or rather a succession of terraces and little irregular courts on the different floors, for never was anything so opposed to architectural symmetry as the ups and downs of these edifices. Yet, Beyrout has been extolled to the skies by a French and an English traveller, in a manner that cannot but entail disappointment upon those who have followed their footsteps, and whose expectations

have been based upon their florid descriptions. The Frenchman, indeed, was *a Poet*, and therefore beheld everything through the prism of his highly coloured imagination; and the Englishman,—he who has apostrophised this place as "beautiful Beyrout!" and "the loveliest City of the Earth!"—must, I think, have been *a Lover*, whose fair enslaver dwelt within these walls, and converted them into a Paradise for him.

I have already told you that the environs are beautiful, and they alone constitute the charm of Beyrout, the Berytus of the ancients, which even in times of old appears to have possessed no remarkable claims to distinction. Some broken fragments of columns in the Lazaret ground show that a temple once existed there, but, with that single exception, no remains of antiquity are to be discovered in or near the town. It has, however, all the bustle and animation incidental to a sea-port; and being the station for an English and French man-of-war, as well as the residence of all the European Consuls-General for Syria it is much gayer than Turkish towns are wont to be. The variety of Asiatic costumes to be seen in the streets and bazaars is really very picturesque, and I have been much interested in noting the difference of physiognomy and bearing

apparent in the Christian and Moslem races of Syria, as exhibited in the Maronites and Druses here. The former are a chubby-faced, heavy-limbed race, with an indolent soft expression of countenance, a slothful gait, and slovenly dress; their eyes and eyebrows are beautiful, and their complexions fresh, and fair in comparison to the dark Egyptian faces I have of late been accustomed to see,—but how superior in general appearance is the well-formed, lithe-limbed Egyptian Arab, to the Syrian mountaineer! The Druses have as peculiar and distinctive a physiognomy as the Jews, and, like them, look as if they all belonged to one family. Their keen eyes, hawk noses, and firm and martial bearing impart to their persons a certain air of dignity, which is well set off by the enormous white turbans which distinguish them, and the camel-hair cloaks embroidered on the back and shoulders with arabesque designs, which form their outer garments; and their appearance really seems to bear out the assertion advanced by their adherents that "ten Druses would annihilate a hundred Maronites."

The dress of the Druse women is fashioned like that of the Mahometan women of Egypt, with the exception of the coiffure, which consists

of an immense horn of silver, or silver gilt, above two feet long, called a *Tantour*, affixed to the forehead, from which it projects like the horn of an Unicorn; and when, (as is always the case when they go out of doors,) this curious appendage is covered by the enormous white cotton wrapping sheet, which envelops them from head to foot, the appearance of these white phantoms is not only graceless but grotesque. The Tantour is only worn by married women, and a curious custom is attached to the possession of it. On the day of her marriage, when the Druse bride is invested with that matronly ornament, she presents a poignard to her bridegroom, and desires him to make use of it in killing her, should she prove unfaithful to him. This injunction a Druse husband never fails to fulfil, should he discover that his wife has broken her marriage vows; and as soon as he has murdered her, he takes off her Tantour, and putting it into a bag sends it back to her family, who at once understand that it is an announcement of her dishonour and death. Should, however, a husband prove too soft-hearted to execute this stern decree upon his frail partner, her brother would immediately replace him, and become her executioner! The other Asiatic women of Beyrout

veil themselves in public even more scrupulously than the Egyptians; they cover their faces, eyes and all, with a dark-coloured muslin handkerchief, and then envelope their heads and persons in a large white sheet which leaves nothing visible but a pair of yellow boots, and the dark patch that masks their whole countenance.

19th March.

We have been very busy preparing for our journey to Palestine, which must be performed on horseback, carrying everything with us on mules, tents, bedding, canteens and *batterie de cuisine*,—as nothing like an hotel is to be found upon the road. Our cavalcade will consist of four saddle-horses, six baggage mules, and a donkey; and, besides our own servants and Mohammed, we shall be accompanied by a Copt cook, two Sais's, and three muleteers. During the last few days, we have had the pleasure of unexpectedly meeting some of our Nile acquaintance here, just returned from the place to which we are bound, and perfectly enchanted with Jerusalem. We have also enjoyed the novelty of a rainy day, the first we have seen for the last six months; and such a deluge! it poured, not as we say in England "cats and dogs," but elephants and

rhinoceroses! and I was nearly washed out of my saddle last night as I returned to Bianchi's Hotel from dining at Colonel Rose's,—for I was obliged to ride there and back, no carriages existing at Beyrout, and even if they did, no streets being wide enough to admit of their circulation. I inquired of Mrs M., the prettiest and most elegant woman in the Levant, how she manages here during the season of balls and fêtes, and learned that she possesses the treasure of a sedan-chair, which effectually shields the draperies of the fair Consulessa from being, "visited too roughly by the winds of Heaven."

Adieu! we start to-morrow, and long before this letter reaches you, we shall have reached the Holy City!

CHAPTER VIII.

TAKTARAWAN.—NEBBI YONI.—SIDON.—LADY HESTER STANHOPE. —CONSULAR FAMILY.—TYRE.—SYRIAN WOMEN.—FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY.—ST. JEAN D'ACRE.—THE HAKIM BASHI.—MOUNT CARMEL.—FRANCISCAN CONVENT.—VOYAGE.—A GALE. —TORTURA.—CÆSAREA.—JAFFA.—THE PLAIN OF SHARON.—LATROUM.—PILGRIMS.—VALLEY OF JEREMIAH.—HILLS OF JUDEA.—FIRST VIEW OF JERUSALEM.—ARRIVAL.

Jerusalem, April 1, 1846.

Our journey hither commenced, as I told you it would, on the 20th of March. Every possible precaution had been taken to diminish the hardships of it for me, and amongst the rest, a sort of double palanquin called a *Taktarawan*, one side of which was destined to contain me, the other my maid, had been arranged upon one of the mules, in the event either of rain or the fatigue of riding driving me to its shelter. I, however, found it so uncomfortable upon trial, from the cramped position in which its dimensions forced me to sit, that I abandoned it on the first day to my maid

and to Yussuf our cook, and never quitted my horse during the remainder of the journey. Our road lay along the sea-shore; and on the early part of the first day we had to wade through sands deep as those of the African Desert, while in the latter part we encountered the most awful mountain road, composed of sharp fragments of rock, which appeared to me to defy the possibility of a horse passing in safety over it. On the left, the lofty range of Lebanon, with towns and villages nestling in its clefts, bounded the prospect, stretching far away in an apparently interminable line: on our right, the blue sea calmly rippled over the smooth sands; and before us we could trace the picturesque sinuosities of the coast of ancient Phœnicia, the earliest mistress of the seas—the cradle from whence sprung so much of the early colonization of Europe!

Our tents were pitched that night at a solitary spot called Nebbi Yoni (the prophet Jonas), which is averred to be the identical place where Jonas was cast ashore from the whale's belly. A tomb marks the spot, which is held sacred by the Mahometans, and placed under the guardianship of an old man wearing an immense green turban, who was announced to us as a descendant of the prophet. I naturally supposed that the Prophet

of Islamism (Mahomet) was intended; but on inquiring whether I was right, the old man corrected my error by informing us that he was "*a relation of the Prophet Jonas!*"

Our first night under canvass was passed tolerably well; and although the horses and mules, which were tethered and picketed under some wild fig-trees close by, made a terrible noise, I was so tired that I contrived to fall asleep in the midst of the unusual uproar. Early next morning we resumed our journey, and continued to follow the sea-shore to Saida (the ancient Sidon, but how fallen from her glory, when she and Tyre were the Queens of the East!) which we reached much too early in the day to think of passing the night there. We therefore sent on the mules and luggage while we visited the town. It possesses no interest beyond the fact of its site being identical with that of the capital of Phœnicia, and of its being perhaps the utmost limit of our Saviour's wanderings in the circumscribed territory which became the theatre of his Divine ministry, during the short period that preceded his Passion and Death.

Sidon is perhaps the most ancient town in the world: the inhabitants pride themselves upon its being five hundred years older than Tyre; and

assert that it was built by a son of Noah. In the adjoining mountains there are catacombs containing Phœnician inscriptions; and at about five hours ride from the town, in a wild and mountainous district, is a spot which I would fain have visited, had not time been so precious to us, and the period so short for our reaching Jerusalem before the Holy Week, (when the immense influx of Christian pilgrims renders it very difficult to obtain any accommodation in the town,) that even the delay of a single day was to be avoided. I allude to Djouni, the spot so long inhabited by our extraordinary countrywoman, Lady Hester Stanhope, and which her rank, her eccentricities, and her influence over the wild Arab tribes of Syria, had during her lifetime converted into a place of pilgrimage for travellers of all nations; albeit the noble recluse rarely rewarded their solicitations to behold her by admitting them to her presence. She was right! for the vanity and egotism of almost all scribbling wanderers generally leads them to misrepresent the interviews they may chance to obtain from remarkable individuals. Had Lady Hester Stanhope still been living I should have felt no desire to approach her dwelling; but I longed to stand by her lonely grave, and to pluck from thence

one of the roses which she had planted there when the spot which now contains her tomb was her favourite haunt—a garden of beauty and exquisite cultivation—now a tangled wilderness of rank weeds and flowers, the wild thorn choking up the roses which trail over and muffle her dust. For Djouni has been suffered to fall into ruin, and no friendly hand is stretched forth to rescue the proud Englishwoman's grave from desecration and oblivion! Mr. Moore gave me a sad and impressive account of his having found her deserted corpse stretched upon the floor of her chamber, and burying her by torch-light in the midst of the lovely garden she had created in that wild solitude. Strange and awful retribution! for she who had abandoned her country—her people—the sweet charities of home—the faith of her fathers—was in her last extremity abandoned by the people of that infidel country which she had adopted as her own!

We rested ourselves for an hour at Saida at the house of the English Consular Agent, a Christian Syrian, who lives in a very patriarchal manner in the bosom of his family, consisting of his wife, his mother, his sister, and seven brothers. The ladies put on all their finery to receive us; and when the wife entered the room,

struck by her extreme fairness and her commanding height, I thought I had never beheld so fine a young woman; but I was quickly undeceived by seeing her descend from a pair of pattens a foot and a half high, and sink into a little dumpy woman. These pattens are curiously inlaid with mother of pearl, and are universally worn in the house by the Syrian women; and during the first year of their marriage they have them made so immoderately high as to be enabled most effectually to over-top and look down upon their husbands.

We did not overtake our caravan until it had halted for the night in a lovely green spot close to the sea-shore, and a few miles beyond Sidon, where we found the tents pitched and dinner waiting for us. The next day's journey was to Sur, the ancient Tyre, over a less difficult road than the two preceding days, but I was far more fatigued than I had yet been; nine hours in the saddle without dismounting, having thoroughly knocked me up.

On reaching Sur we repaired to the house of the English Consular Agent, who, as is the case in all the small towns along the coast in this country, is a native Syrian and a Christian. No emolument is attached to the situation, and the only remuneration these men receive for their services

is British protection, which exempts them from all taxation, and during the period of their filling office gives them the advantages of British subjects. These Consular Agents keep open house for English travellers, a most welcome arrangement in towns where such a thing as an inn was never heard of—that is to say, they place rooms at the stranger's disposal where they may put up their own beds, and eat their own provisions. Some few of them carry their hospitality farther (as was the case with the individual in question), and they receive no remuneration in money, except a gratuity to the servants. The gift of some tea, or a bottle or two of good wine is, however, never refused.

Our host at Sur appeared to be really a worthy man, and so desirous of making us comfortable that, instead of putting us into the empty rooms generally devoted to travellers, he insisted upon our occupying the best rooms in the house. The whole of his lovely family thought it incumbent upon them to make me hold a sort of levée—a ceremony which I would gladly have dispensed with in my fatigued state; and his married daughter came from the other end of the town, dressed in her diamonds, and attended by her husband, to see me.

The costume of the Syrian women is, as far as relates to the form of the garments and the stuffs of which they are composed, similar to that of the Caireens. They also wear on their heads the tarboosh and handkerchief ornamented with diamonds; but instead of their own hair being arranged in plaits over their shoulders, they affix to the back part of their head-dress a substitute, composed of innumerable braids of black or dark purple silk, each braid thickly spangled with small flat gold ornaments, the size and shape of a very small coin. This appendage, descending to the waist, produces a very rich and graceful effect; it costs four thousand piastres (40*l.* sterling), so that it is well that fashions are more permanent in this country than with us, or Syrian husbands would soon be ruined. The most disfiguring part of the head-dress is a square handkerchief, doubled in several folds, and tied over the jaws and mouth, so that every woman looks as if she were suffering from the toothache.

On the following morning we visited the town of Sur, which was not, however, the ancient *city* of Tyre, but only its *port*, and, at the period of the glory and prosperity of the place, was an island. That island was afterwards connected with Continental Tyre by a causeway constructed by Alex-

ander the Great, for the purpose of easier access to Insular Tyre, during his siege of that place; but since that time an accumulation of sand has completely converted it into a peninsula. The existing town is miserable, and the only remarkable monument it contains are the ruins of a fine church of the early Christian era.

Scarcely any remains of Continental Tyre exist, except some parts of a grand aqueduct, which supplied the city with water from the cisterns constructed by Solomon, in acknowledgment of the assistance he had received from Hiram, King of Tyre, in building the Temple of Jerusalem, as set forth in the 5th chapter of the first Book of Kings. But the plain in which it stood appears admirably adapted for the site of a great city, and resembles that in which Thebes was situated. How impressively does its actual desolation bear out the words of prophecy concerning it!

"Is this your joyous city, whose antiquity is of ancient days?"*

"I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God.†"

To relieve the great tedium of thus slowly

* Isaiah, xxiii. 7. † Ezekiel, xxvi. 21.

riding through the country, obliged to regulate our pace by that of the most dilatory of the animals in our cavalcade, we hired an open boat at Sur to convey us to St. Jean d'Acre, a distance of nine or ten hours by land, but which we effected in less than five by sea, sending our horses and mules by the coast road. The weather was lovely, and nothing could be more interesting than the approach to this famous fortress—the ancient Ptolemais—the bulwark of the East, which has more than once checked the progress, and disconcerted the plans of Western aggressors. Before entering the port we made the circuit of that part of the town which faces the sea: its walls are literally honeycombed by the bombardment of 1840; but as I gazed upon those dilapidated ramparts, my thoughts flew back six centuries and a half, and I thought more of Richard and Salah-e'-deen than of the heroes of modern times.

Upon landing we proceeded to the Franciscan Convent, in the hopes of finding shelter there for the night; but the door was inhospitably closed in our faces for our temerity in asking admittance in defiance of a notice written in Italian over the door, to the effect that no woman was ever suffered to enter those holy walls. Nothing could be more ungracious than the manner evinced, although

the circumstance of my being tired and ill was strongly urged to them. We, however, found more Christian treatment at the hands of a Neapolitan physician, who is Hakim Bashi, or Director of the Military Hospital of Acre, and has been upwards of twenty years in the service of the Porte and of the Pasha of Egypt. He has an apartment on the top of the barracks; and as he only occupies two rooms with his kind-hearted little Provençale wife, he has it in his power to accommodate travellers by allowing them to sleep in his superfluous chambers. We were welcomed by the worthy couple with genuine Italian cordiality, and all that their little home furnished was placed at our disposal.

The next morning the Hakim Bashi took us to visit the hospital, which in its time has served many purposes. It was originally the residence of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem; it was afterwards that of the Turkish Pashas of Acre; and lastly, it was converted by Ibrahim Pasha (the son of Mohammed Ali) into a military hospital, to which purpose it has ever since been devoted. From its roof we obtained the finest *coup-d'œil* of the town and the splendid Bay; and our host gave us in ten minutes a fuller idea of the various and sanguinary sieges which this place

has endured than as many years' reading would have done. A small mound, still known by the name of "Le Mont Napoleon," was pointed out to us, and it was from thence that General Buonaparte was obliged, in abandoning "*cette petite bicoque*," as he termed Acre, to abandon also the conquest of the East. We saw the spot where two hundred of his men penetrated into the town and were taken prisoners. They had gallantly fought their way through the breach to the splendid mosque built by Djezzar Pasha for his own mausoleum, (and where that sanguinary tyrant now lies); but overcome by numbers, they were then obliged to surrender. The ruins of the late explosion still encumber the ground, rendering its wretched interior doubly wretched. After walking through the squalid streets and bazaars, under the guidance of the English Consular Agent, who is an Italian Jew, and the worthy Hakim Bashi, we embarked once more in our open boat, and were steered across the bay to the little town of Caiffa, which lies on the southern side of it at the foot of Mount Carmel.

There our horses awaited us, and we rode up the mountain, pausing by the way to see the grotto said to have been once inhabited by the prophet Elias, and over which Moslem piety has

caused a little tomb-like construction to be erected. Let no traveller advance that "the excellency of Carmel" (so often alluded to by Isaiah in his prophecy) has departed, or venture to depreciate its actual beauty. "*The vineyards*" have, indeed, vanished from its sides, but the *olive* still flourishes on the lower ground, where the disposition of the luxuriantly-sized trees, and the thick carpet of verdure at their feet, reminded me of the home scenery of an English park. But never in England were such wild flowers seen as those that wave in glowing profusion over the lower ascent of Carmel; the ground is literally enamelled with the loveliest variety of hues, and the air embalmed with the most delicate odours.

As we advanced the road gradually became more precipitous, and the soil more barren, until in the latter part it terminated in a steep and difficult pathway cut in the rock. The convent of the Franciscan Friars is not at the extreme summit of Mount Carmel, but occupies a platform, beaten by the winds, rather lower down. The brotherhood are equally bound with their brethren of Acre to exclude women from their holy precincts; but, less austere, or rather, more humane, they have devoted a portion of their premises to the accommodation of travellers of both sexes; and

nothing can be more cordial than the welcome bestowed, or the hospitality offered by these worthy recluses to the way-faring pilgrims who ring at their gate.

We found a clean and cheerful sitting-room, excellent sleeping-chambers, and such fare as the Catholic Lent affords. The Fra Speziale, whose turn it was to receive and entertain the guests of the convent, sat by and conversed with us during dinner; but he could not be prevailed upon to share our repast; such a convivial indulgence is forbidden by the rules of their order; and never yet has any one of them broken bread with "the stranger within their gates." As soon as the repast was over, however, he produced a bottle of excellent Rosolio made by himself, and pouring out a glass for each person present, including himself, pledged us in it, remarking that although not permitted to eat with us, he might drink our healths.

The venerable and indefatigable Fra Giam Battista, to whose strenuous exertions and personal devotedness the actual building owes its existence, (as the funds for its construction were entirely raised by the collections he made in the different Catholic countries of Europe, during fourteen years journeying in his quality of mendicant friar), is at

present absent on the same mission—for it would appear that the exchequer of the establishment is in so exhausted a state as to require again the assistance of European purses. There are, at present, only eight brothers in the convent, two of whom are Spaniards, the remainder Piedmontese. Their rules are very strict, for they never taste meat, except in case of their health requiring it, when permission is given them to adopt a more generous diet: and during Lent they are not allowed to eat eggs, butter, milk, or cheese—nothing but fish, and vegetables dressed with oil. I was taken by the Fra Speziale through those parts of the convent which women's feet are allowed to tread; among the rest to Elijah's cave, which is enclosed within it, and is assumed to be the identical spot where the prophet sought for refuge during his persecutions. The view from the summit of Carmel is very fine, and embraces the whole of the lovely Bay of Acre, with the time-worn and war-worn walls of St. Jean d'Acre at its northern extremity, and the Castle of Pellegrino at the south. It was from this spot that Madame Cottin in her charming romance of "Mathilde," represented the beautiful sister of Cœur de Lion (who had taken the veil among the Christian virgins of Mount Carmel after the

death of her Saracen lover), as looking out over the blue sea upon the barks which bore away for ever from the shores of Palestine the gallant Richard and his followers; and as the white sails lessened in the distance, turning her eyes from thence towards the spot to which all her earthly affections were wedded,—the grave of Malek Adhel,—and feeling that she was not alone. I ought not to have thought of anything so profane as a French romance upon the heights of Mount Carmel; but early impressions are stubborn things, and the associations attached to its name recalled in all their vividness the delight and the grief with which I had in my very young days perused that interesting episode of the Crusades.

The weather and the wind still continuing favourable, we again sent forward our horses and mules by land, and bidding farewell to the hospitable monks of Carmel (whom we thankfully requited by an offering made in the form of a contribution to their charitable fund), we returned to our boat at Caiffa, and embarked for Jaffa—a distance of about sixty miles—with a fair wind, and every prospect of reaching that place in the night. But our expectations were frustrated by the wind heading us after sunset, and we made but little

progress between that time and day-light the following morning.

Our bark was anything but a pleasant conveyance in rough weather, being one of those undecked sail-boats used for the transport of grain along the coast, manned by a Reis and four sailors. We had our Dragoman and cook with us, who contrived, notwithstanding the tossing of the bark and the want of accommodation, to dress us an excellent dinner, and to put up my bedstead, and cover it in so effectually with a sail as to afford me all the privacy of a tent. Commend me to Arab servants for expedients and address in emergencies! In situations where European attendants, with their hands hanging by their sides, can only look about them in helpless despair, an Arab will *improvise* you a kitchen and a sitting-room; and before you have time to think of inquiring whether any refreshments are to be had, a fire will be blazing, the coffee bubbling upon it, the pilaff sending forth its savory odour as it simmers soberly, and the top of the traveller's canteen laid out as a dinner-table.

At daylight the gale increased from the south-west with a heavy sea; we were then within two hours' sale of Jaffa, had the wind been fair; and the sailors said they could distinguish its

minarets; and yet to approach it was impossible! Independent of the hopelessness of beating into Jaffa in our wretched craft, it would not have been within the scope of possibility to have landed there, even had we been before the town; for Jaffa is the most unapproachable port in the Mediterranean (if port it can be called) when the wind is on shore. We anchored in the hopes of riding out the gale, but it increased in violence, and our position was anything but agreeable;—a strong wind—a heavy sea, and a terrific lee shore with breakers on it that warned us of our danger; the most formidable part of which was, that should we be driven upon them we must inevitably become the prey of the Bedouin tribes who infest the coast, and never fail to pour down upon stranded vessels and pillage them!

In this emergency we had nothing for it but to run before the wind for Tortura, a little port not far from Caiffa, before which we had sailed at noon on the preceding day; so orders were given to weigh anchor, when to our dismay it was found that the anchor had got entangled in the rocks, and the strain on the cable was such that every moment threatened to break it. One of our crew, a young Copt, (the rest were all Arabs),

dived from the side of the vessel, and in a few moments freed the anchor, and we then scudded before the wind back to Tortura, where a ridge of rocks with a narrow opening in them forms a little harbour for small craft. We were carried on shore upon the shoulders of our sailors, and with difficulty found, in the wretched Arab village there, a house in which we might shelter ourselves for the coming night, while we sent off a messenger on horseback to endeavour to overtake and bring back our horses and mules, which had doubtless already arrived at Jaffa.

The house we hired possessed all the outward appearance of cleanliness, and we had our own beds to sleep upon; but oh heavens! what a night did we pass in it! The bugs came *raining down* from the wooden rafters, and as fast as every shower of them was swept away, another succeeded, so that sleep never for one moment visited our eyelids. Well is the place named Tortura, for never was torture equal to that which is there inflicted upon unhappy travellers. At daybreak we were up; and finding it intolerable to prolong our stay in such a nest of vermin, we hired horses and camels to carry us forward, and accelerate our meeting with our own mules, &c. &c. Thus we were obliged to return

by land the same distance which we had gone two days before by sea!

We were already in the Holy Land, and what solemn, what thrilling associations are inseparable from the knowledge that the ground one treads upon has been sanctified by the footsteps of the Saviour of the world and his disciples, and the presence of the prophets who, ages before his Incarnation, foretold his coming! The ride (I must not say the *road*, for road there is none) was beautiful; we passed by the splendid ruins of the ancient Cæsarea, the Capital of Herod, now tenanted only by snakes and scorpions, its turreted walls guarded by bats and owls. The fortress was restored by St. Louis, and still presents all the character of force, and even of art, exhibited in fortifications of a more modern date. Herod there formed a port, which was a refuge for all the vessels of Syria, and it was from thence that the apostles embarked for their various destinations, to scatter the seeds of the Gospel in Greece and Italy, and to testify to its truth with their blood. Cæsarea is also the place where St. Paul was so long detained as a prisoner, and where he uttered that beautiful oration before King Agrippa and Festus which drew from the former the declaration of "Al-

most thou persuadest me to be a Christian!" It was there, too, that St. Peter, who had been sent for to Joppa (Jaffa) by Cornelius the centurion, baptized him and all who were with him, "upon whom the Holy Ghost had fallen," as they listened to his word.

We met our horses and mules late in the day, and sending back the camels, &c. to Tortura, bivouacked that night in the plain at about seven hours' distance from Jaffa, and in sight of a large Bedouin camp. Such was the horror which our martyrdom at Tortura had left upon our minds, that when we reached Jaffa on the following evening, we preferred encamping ourselves outside the town, to being again exposed to the chances of being devoured with vermin. We were charmed with the external appearance of the town, surrounded as it is by castellated walls, extensive gardens, and luxuriant groves of orange-trees; but the interior possesses all that up-and-down-wretchedness of ruins and rubbish which characterizes the other Syrian towns through which we have passed, although it has had the advantage of a recent earthquake (from which it suffered more than almost any other place in Palestine), and which has entailed the necessity of some new buildings being erected in place of the old ones.

Many events recorded in sacred and profane history have invested Jaffa with a deep and even a holy interest. It was there that Noah built the Ark; it was from thence that Jonah took ship for Tarshish; there, also, Perseus is said to have rescued Andromeda from the sea monster; and there St. Peter raised Tabitha from the dead, and beheld the vision of things clean and unclean which preceded his call to Cæsarea to convert the centurion Cornelius. It was the Portsmouth of the Jewish territory; and is in that respect evidence that the Jews never could have had a navy of large ships, as Jaffa is not to be approached by any vessels whatever in bad weather, and its port will harbour none but very small ones even in fine weather. Jaffa has been lamentably celebrated in modern times by Napoleon's butchery of his Turkish prisoners, and of his own sick and wounded.

As we quitted the place the next morning, we rode through lanes formed by impenetrable hedges of the cactus, which there grows to an enormous size; and above those formidable barriers we could perceive the upper branches of the orange-trees, some of them laden with their golden fruit, others white with blossoms, whose perfume rendered the warm air fragrant almost

to heaviness. The orange groves of Jaffa which furnish fruit to the whole of Palestine, extend to a considerable distance from the town, and form the most charming feature in that locality. The road to Ramla (the ancient Arimathea) lies through the plain of Sharon; a splendid tract of land, extending to the foot of the hills of Judea, and luxuriant with an endless variety of beautiful flowers, which grow wild under the glowing sun of the East, but in our own more cloudy climes are fostered into blossom by artificial heat. I looked for "the Rose of Sharon" among them; but the only roses I discovered there, were a sort of dwarf Eglantine, some of which had blossoms of a purplish pink, and others of white; but would the gorgeous Solomon have condescended to assimilate himself to a flower so humble and unobtrusive as that lowly wild rose? It was there that Elijah "girded up his loins and fled before Ahab;" and beyond it, to the south, lies the country of the Philistines.

Ramla is beautifully situated in that lovely plain; we did not enter the town, but made a halt at a little distance near a spring of water, and dined *al fresco* under the trees. A curious tower stands outside of the town; it was in the

early ages of Christianity dedicated to the Forty Martyrs, and afterwards made to serve as pedestal to the minaret of a mosque now in ruins; there are also some remains of a cistern attributed to the Empress Helena, whose name has, I fancy, been attached to many monuments which probably sprung into existence long after her energetic spirit had cast off its mortal coil. It is scarcely credible that a woman turned of eighty, at which age she had arrived when she made a pilgrimage to Palestine, should have undertaken the numerous constructions, pointing out what are believed to be the Holy sites, which are imputed to her.

We pitched our tents that night at the extremity of the plain, on the skirts of the ruined cemetery of a village called Latroum, or the Thief's village, which crowns a rocky and barren hill, and is said to have been the birth-place of the repentant malefactor who died on the cross by the side of our Saviour. It would appear that the locality has retained, even in modern times, a speciality for dishonesty; for Mohammed, after informing us that every one of its inhabitants were thieves and rogues, thought it necessary to fire off all our pistols and guns at intervals during the night, to show that we were

prepared to repulse any attack that might be attempted; and we also organized a guard of two of our men to be relieved every three hours until the return of daylight. A most villainous looking population crowded round our tents to stare at us while we were taking tea; but probably owing to the precautions we had taken, the night passed quietly, and early the next morning we resumed our weary way.

The hill country of Judea stretched before us to the east, and behind that mountainous barrier lay the City of Jerusalem! In about an hour after starting, we entered the rocky defile, and commenced our painful and difficult ascent along paths so rugged and narrow as to be nearly impassable. The crowds of pilgrims that we fell in with, composed of Christians from all parts of the world, hastening to the Sepulchre of Christ, in order to witness the commemoration of His Passion and Death on the very spot where He suffered, materially increased the difficulties of the way. The so-called road is so narrow that in most places it will only admit of the passage of one loaded mule at a time; but although we could contrive to keep our own cavalcade *en file*, we had no power to prevent the mules and camels of others from rushing past and jostling

us, and endless was the confusion and displacing of luggage that ensued.

I had imagined that when we had attained the summit of the chain of mountains that form a natural rampart to the land of Judah, we should obtain a view of the Holy City; but my expectation was disappointed. Arrived at the highest point, we could discern nothing before us, but ridge after ridge of hills, a series of rocky undulations separated by gloomy valleys. The first of these is the Valley of Jeremiah; where the Prophet of the Lamentations first saw the light—and which is now known among the Syrian people as the country of the celebrated Abou Gosch, an Arab robber chieftain upon a grand scale, a sort of Moslem Rob Roy, who formerly laid the whole country under contribution, and enforced a black mail tribute from all travellers and pilgrims journeying to Jerusalem. But he has of late years settled down into not only an honest man, but a worthy and hospitable member of the social community; and has abandoned his vagrant life for a comfortable habitation, which looks solid enough to pass for a Christian convent—a transformation effected by Ibrahim Pasha, who made him understand that "two of a trade seldom agree," and that he

himself was going to carry on business upon his own account in a way that would admit of no partnership.

We descended from the Valley of Jeremiah into another still deeper defile, the gloom and barrenness of the scene increasing at every step. A little further on, the streamlet is pointed out from whose pebbly bed David selected the stones with which he went forth to slay the giant Goliah. Still advancing, all became desert around us; the rare and stunted olive trees, the thin herbage, which had hitherto been scattered on the hills, entirely disappeared, and nothing but loose stones encumbering the rocky soil were to be seen. Faint and weary with excitement and with the difficulties of the road, I vainly strained my eyes, as height after height was passed by us, to obtain a distant glimpse of Jerusalem, and fancied that each ascent surmounted would bring it into view; but disappointment followed disappointment so repeatedly that I began to think I should, like Moses, sink before reaching the Promised Land. At last an ascent of an hour brought us to an elevated plateau, from whence we looked over a dreary, naked plain without one spot of verdure or vestige of cultivation to break the utter lifelessness of the scene. Before us, on the edge of

the horizon, we distinguished a few minarets—then a castellated wall flanked with towers rose upon our view, all tinted with the same livid colouring that imparts such an indescribable melancholy to the whole landscape. Our hearts throbbed almost to suffocation, and our eyes became dim with tears as we gazed; for cold must be the bosom that preserves its tranquil equanimity in the all-exciting moment of first approaching the Holy City! Onward we rode for another hour through the desert plain, and then, passing under a lofty gateway guarded by Turkish soldiers, entered the narrow, wretched streets of Jerusalem. Scarcely could our horses maintain their footing upon the broken rocks with which its squalid causeways are paved. "Is this the city that men called the Perfection of Beauty, the joy of the whole Earth?" * involuntarily recurred to my recollection as I cast my eyes around me upon a scene of melancholy, unequalled perhaps in any other inhabited city—for Jerusalem does not possess the dignity of a deserted ruin; living misery adds to the misery of its dilapidation;—the whole place looks like the illustration of an awful curse!

Arrived at the hotel kept by a Maltese, where

* Lamentations of Jeremiah ii. 15.

rooms had been secured for us, I was lifted from my horse and carried up stairs; so many days riding over the rugged hills and plains of Syria, wound up by the fatigue and emotion of the last eight hours, had completely exhausted me—I flung myself upon the bed, and, bursting into tears, wept long and unrestrainedly.

CHAPTER IX.

JERUSALEM.—VIA DOLOROSA.—THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.—CHRISTIANS OF THE EAST.—GUARDIANSHIP OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.—DOUBTS.—STONE OF UNCTION.—TOMB OF CHRIST.—HOLY SITES.—GREEK CHAPEL.—CALVARY.—CHAPEL OF THE CRUCIFIXION.—TOMB OF GODFREY DE BOUILLON.—IDENTITY OF THE HOLY SITES.—DOUBTS.—THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.—VIEW OF JERUSALEM.—MOSQUE OF OMAR.—VALLEY OF JEHOSAPHAT.—SITE OF THE ASCENSION.—MIRACULOUS FOOTMARK.—THE LAND OF PROMISE.—TOMB OF THE VIRGIN.—MONKISH LEGEND.

Jerusalem, April 6, 1846.

It was on the 30th of March that we reached Jerusalem, and henceforward that day will be contemplated by me as a sacred epoch in my life. I shall not attempt to describe the sensations with which I found myself within its walls, or the emotions with which I afterwards visited the Holy sites they contain;—they were of a nature wholly distinct from anything that I had ever before felt, either in the enthusiasm of admiration elicited by the first sight of some

remarkable monument, or in the triumphant excitement with which a long desired object had been attained,—but although subdued by them as I never yet had been, I felt that I was all the better for their chastening influence. Monsieur de Chateaubriand, in his unapproachable style, has so eloquently summed up all that the Christian must feel at the first aspect of this land of miracles, that I shall make no apology to you for here inserting his words. The genius of the poet has indeed imparted sublimity to the convictions of the true believer!

"Quand on voyage dans la Judée, d'abord un grand ennui saisit le cœur; mais lorsque, passant de solitude en solitude, l'espace s'étend sans bornes devant vous, peu à peu l'ennui se dissipe; on éprouve une terreur sainte qui, loin d'abaisser l'âme, donne du courage, et élève le génie. Des aspects extraordinaires décèlent de toutes parts une terre travaillée par les miracles: le soleil brulant, l'aigle impetueux, le figuier sterile, toute la poësie, tous les tableaux de l'Ecriture sont là. Chaque nom renferme un mystère; chaque grotte déclare l'avenir, chaque sommet retentit des accents d'un prophète. Dieu même a parlé sur ces bords: les torrens desséchés, les rochers pendus, les tombeaux entr'ouverts, attestent

le prodige; le desert parait encore muet de terreur, et on dirait qu'il n'a osé rompre le silence depuis qu'il a entendu la voix de l'Eternel."

It was precisely in this frame of mind that I penetrated into the land of God's chosen people, —my only Handbook was the Bible, and all my observations were restricted to the marvellous workings out of prophecy as exhibited in the actual state of people and things in this once prosperous territory,—surely this alone would be enough to make the scoffer believe!

We found located in our hotel a French gentleman whom we had known at Cairo. Monsieur J—— is a phenomenon in the present day; a young man born and brought up in the free-thinking world of Paris, and yet a most devout Catholic, and a most rigid observer of all the practices of his faith. He is here *en pélerinage*, and has already ingratiated himself into the good graces of the brethren of the Latin convent, from whom he has obtained the most useful information for a stranger visiting Jerusalem; and the moment he heard of our arrival, he very kindly came to offer himself as our Cicerone to the Holy sites, and placed at my disposition an Egyptian donkey which he had brought with him across the desert from Cairo. Under his

auspices, we commenced our interesting survey of Jerusalem, and were first taken to the building known by the name of Pilate's House, now occupied by the Turkish Commandant; the terraced roof of which commands an admirable view of the Mosque of Omar, the holiest as well as the most splendid of the temples of Islamism, occupying the site of the ancient Holy of Holies, the temple of the Jews, in which our Saviour "taught daily." At Pilate's house commences the Via Dolorosa, the road which Our Lord is supposed to have traversed, sinking under the burthen of his Cross, as He proceeded from judgment to execution upon Calvary. This Path of Sorrow is divided into several stations, which, although not alluded to in any of the gospel accounts of the Crucifixion, are pointed out by monkish tradition as marking the different episodes of that melancholy procession. At one place an arch is shown, under which the Virgin Mary, who had been forbidden to accompany her son, stationed herself that she might behold Him once more, and follow Him at a distance to the place of suffering; but the mother's heart failed her at the sight of her first-born led forth to sacrifice, and she sunk fainting into the arms of the women who accompanied her. At another,

you are shown the place where Jesus himself sunk to the ground, and in the fall, the Cross coming in contact with the wall, left thereon a miraculous indentation. Again, you are called upon to remark a second place where the strength of the Holy victim failed him; there Veronica came out of her house and wiped the perspiration from her Lord's face with a handkerchief, which, we are told, has ever since preserved an impression of the Divine lineaments, and now forms one of the famous Catholic relics known by the name of *Le saint suaire.* Still further on, you are called upon to remark the fragment of an ancient column embedded in the wall; and this, you are told, formed part of the gate through which Jesus passed to the place of execution beyond the city walls; and upon that identical fragment His sentence of death was exhibited to the populace!

This is drawing largely—not upon the *faith,* let me hope, but upon the *credulity* of the Christian Pilgrim. When we remember that Jerusalem was completely destroyed by Titus's army after the death of Christ, that not one stone was left standing upon another— that even the city afterwards built by Hadrian to replace it, although occupying the same site, has, in its turn, been so

often, amidst the chances of war, and the convulsions of Nature, destroyed and rebuilt, that the traces of many of the sites of the original city must necessarily have become lost in so many changes, our reason is disposed to revolt at the minutiæ with which these particulars respecting the locality of our Saviour's passage to Calvary, and the peculiar circumstances attending it are impressed upon us. We are told, "There is *the arch* under which Pilate appeared when he showed Jesus to the people, and exclaimed, "*Ecce Homo!*"—"Under *that gateway* the Virgin fainted when she beheld her son led out to die."—"This is *Veronica's house,*" "There is the *mark produced by the Cross* striking against the wall, when Jesus fell to the ground under its weight! &c. &c." And yet we know that within a century after the death of our Saviour, the arch, the gateway, the house, the wall, the city itself, and all it contained, were swept into chaotic ruin! It is, indeed, highly probable, that as the testimony of the disciples and other eye-witnesses of the Crucifixion, must have handed down to succeeding generations a knowledge of the line of march taken by Jesus on his way to death, that a correct notion of the locality had been preserved when Hadrian rebuilt the city;

and that the ground now occupied by the Via Dolorosa may be identical with that trodden by the Son of God, when the last fearful act of the mystery of our redemption was about to be accomplished. It was enough for me to believe this! it was enough for me to know that *there*, or somewhere not very far removed from thence, the mournful circumstances attending the closing scene had passed — that there the victim had forgotten his own sufferings to console those who wept for him—that there had been pronounced those prophetic words: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children, &c. &c.!" This belief, I repeat, was all-sufficient for me; and I looked coldly upon the accessories which the hand of man has scattered along the path, and listened carelessly to the traditions with which human ingenuity has sought to add to its solemn interest.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which comprises within its walls not only the Tomb of Christ, but all the localities identified with His Passion, Death, and Burial, terminates the Via Dolorosa. It stands in the corner of a small open space, or square, filled at this season with the vendors of chaplets, rosaries, and other trifles manufactured by the Christians of Bethlehem,

from the mother of pearl brought from the Red Sea, (which are purchased as holy relics by the Christian Pilgrims who annually visit Jerusalem and scattered by them all over the Catholic world)—and possessing no architectural merit either within or without. The greater part of the church was destroyed by fire in 1808, and reconstructed by the Greeks at their own expense, and in a most faulty and tawdry taste. The various sects of Christians of the East, viz: Latins, Greeks, (both united and schismatic,) Armenians, Copts, Abyssinians, Georgians, &c., possess each a chapel in the church; but the protection of the Holy Sepulchre is entrusted to the Latins (or Catholics), although the greater part of the edifice, as well as the spot upon Mount Calvary where the Cross was planted, belongs to the Greeks, while the Latins now only possess the chapel containing the Pillar of the Flagellation in the body of the church, and a small chapel upon Calvary constructed over the place where our Saviour was nailed to the Cross.

This preponderance of the Greek influence over that of the Latins, whose zeal and exertions on behalf of the Holy Sepulchre unquestionably date from a remoter period, (that of the Crusades,) is supposed to have been effected by the

atrocious act of having caused the fire which destroyed the church in the commencement of this century, at a moment when France possessed neither money to devote to religious purposes, nor inclination to uphold religious establishments. The Greeks then took advantage of the disaster to come forward with such funds as at once transferred to them the superiority they have ever since possessed; but the public suffers from the shameful rivalry existing between the two religions.

The first grievance springing from it is the scandalous manner in which the guardianship of the entrance of the Holy Sepulchre is conducted, being transferred entirely to the Turks, not so much as a measure of tyranny on the part of the government as one of precaution, arising from the impossibility of its being entrusted to the Christians, whose rancorous animosity towards each other would lead to the most lamentable disorder. The three religions, Catholic, Greek, and Armenian, have all rights and privileges in the same church, and their mutual hatreds and jealousies, amounting almost to open warfare, certainly exhibit to the Mahometan rulers of this country a disgraceful picture of the "Church Militant," and furnish grounds to them for asserting that the spot adored by Christians as the

tomb of their Redeemer, cannot be a holy one, otherwise God would not permit it to be desecrated by such unseemly disputes!

But it is a deplorable fact that the slighter the shades of difference in religion, the greater the separation of feeling that is produced—and that no hatreds are so strong as those springing from the (oh, how miscalled!) love of God—that love which should lead our hearts to charity and forgiveness, instead of bitterness and persecution, —which should be a bond of peace instead of a brand of discord! Thus, these three sects, all professing the same fundamental principles of faith, are obliged to accept the direction and protection of a religion which they unite in contemning as hateful and infidel, in order to control the disorders that are ever ready to break out amongst themselves. Even as it is, the most indecent hostilities take place; for, whilst the Catholics are celebrating mass, the Greeks invariably endeavour to disturb them by some of the boisterous processions in which their rites abound.

There is no fixed hour for the church being open, as each of the three religions have their Turkish Janissary, and not one of them dares to unlock the doors but in the presence of the other two; so that it is often requisite to send all over

the town to bring these functionaries together. As they invariably expect a *backshish* for the trouble of coming, they take care never to be in the way; and unless you happen to arrive after some other visitors have brought together these roving Cerberuses, you must be content to wait until that operation be effected. We ourselves experienced this annoyance, although it is less frequent at this moment in consequence of the great influx of pilgrims; but I am told that in summer eight or nine days frequently elapse without the doors of the church being unclosed. Each of the three religions have habitations connected with the interior of the church, where some of the monks take it in turn to reside, and are relieved from the convents outside. During these periods of seclusion, the fathers never quit the precincts of the church, but their friends come to speak to them through a little grated aperture in the door, and convey to them through the same channel anything they may require.

I must be candid with you, and avow that my first impression, on visiting the spots within the church believed to be identified with the Passion of Christ, was one of mystification at beholding their close proximity, and the incredibly small space into which so much — indeed

everything connected with that sacred event has been crowded. My own feelings — my own wishes were so strong as to amount almost to conviction, — they all tended to unrestricted faith in the genuineness of the localities; and yet I was bewildered and staggered by a first view of them. But even should the sites pointed out be genuine, the hand of man has done much to destroy their awe-inspiring interest by the puerile accessories of Catholic consecration. The first of these to which the stranger is led on entering the church, is the "Stone of Unction," upon which the body of our Lord, when taken down from the Cross, was anointed and prepared for entombment. It is covered with a casing of marble to preserve it from the destructive adoration of Christian pilgrims, who would fain have carried it away piecemeal for relics; and over it are suspended silver lamps, burning night and day. A few paces from it, an iron machine, looking like a large unglazed lanthorn, marks the spot where the Maries stood and watched the performance of the last sad offices. Turning to the left, a few steps brings you into the nave of the church, over which rises a lofty dome supported by columns. The nave is circular, and in the centre of it

is placed the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre; that spot which the chivalry of Europe poured out its best blood in torrents to rescue from the hands of the Infidels, and only succeeded in retaining during eighty years.

It is a small oblong building composed of marble, and divided into two compartments; in the first of these is the stone (a block of polished marble) which the angel of the Lord rolled back from the door of the sepulchre, and upon which the two Maries found him seated when he announced to them the tidings of the Resurrection. The genuineness of this stone is disputed by the Armenians, who possess one in their chapel upon Mount Sion, which they declare to be the *only true one.* In the interior compartment is the sepulchre itself; a square covered sarcophagus cased like the stone of Unction with marble, lighted night and day with silver lamps, the gifts of Catholic Princes, and occupying one half of the little chapel, lined with *verd antique,* and surmounted by a small cupola that contains it. No similitude certainly exists between this tomb, standing above ground, and the sepulchre *hewn out of the rock,* specified by the Evangelists as being the burial-place of our Lord. Much more in unison with their descrip-

tion are the excavations in the rock upon which the church is based, which are shown as the tombs of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, and are said to communicate by a subterranean passage with the sepulchre of Christ—but I am not going to enter into any controversy; I shall merely specify what were my own unbiassed impressions relative to the objects that there met my eyes for the first time. On the north of the Holy Sepulchre is the Chapel of the Apparition, built upon the spot where Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalen, after he had risen from the dead, and was mistaken by her for a gardener. In the doorway is a fragment of the column to which our Saviour was bound when he was scourged by order of Pilate; this is called the Pillar of Flagellation, and near to it are several small chapels, in one of which is the stone upon which the soldiers seated Jesus when they crowned him with thorns; in another, the spot where they "cast lots for his vesture;" in a third, the place to which the soldier who pierced our Saviour's side upon the Cross retired, struck by sudden remorse, and shed bitter tears over his sacrilegious act. But the most revered of all these chapels is that of *The Cross;* a subterraneous chamber approached by two flights of marble stairs, and dimly lighted

by lamps, which just serve to render darkness visible. There, in accordance with the dream of the sainted Helena, the True Cross was found in a deep pit, together with the crucifixes upon which the two malefactors suffered by the side of our Lord. How its genuineness was tested, and what were the miraculous results, I need not here repeat—but this I may whisper to you, that if all the fragments of the True Cross which I have seen in the different churches of Catholic Europe were assembled together, they would afford sufficient materials to construct a very respectable-sized chapel.

The Greek chapel is in harmony with the preponderance of Greek influence over the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; it is by far the largest chapel in the whole edifice, and contains, amidst much faulty ornament, an accessory of a somewhat questionable nature. In the middle of the marble pavement is placed a spherical stone, which the Greeks aver covers the centre of the earth; and underneath it, or somewhere very near, they also tell you the head of Adam is buried.

All that I have thus specified is comprised in the lower part of the church, which is by no means remarkable for its size; and, after

having duly noted each, you are conducted up a flight of eighteen steep marble steps, and told that you are upon Calvary. There is something in that name that forbids—or *ought* to forbid—the possibility of a flippant remark being made in conjunction with it; and if an irreverent idea should suggest itself as to the startling fact of finding the sites of our Saviour's Passion arranged as in a familiar dwelling-house, upon the first and second floor, it must quickly be repelled by the knowledge that, *if not there*, at some place not far removed, the great act of man's redemption was sealed with the blood of Christ. I envy not the feelings that could find room for aught else at such a moment; and so entirely was I absorbed by that thought alone, that when I bent down in order that I might enter the low space beneath the altar which occupies the extremity of the chapel upon Calvary, and that I knelt to examine the socket beneath it, said to be the identical one in which the Cross was planted, the strong emotion that swelled my heart to suffocation overflowed at my eyes; and tears of humility, of contrition, of thankfulness, fell fast from them upon the spot which had perhaps been moistened with the precious blood that was shed to wash away our sins.

"Here, Lord, where currents from thy wounded side,
Stained the besprinkled ground with sanguine red,
Should not these two quick springs at least, their tide
In bitter memory of thy Passion shed?
And melt'st thou not, my icy heart, where bled
Thy dear Redeemer? still must pity sleep?
My guilty bosom, why so cold and dead?
Break, and with tears the hallowed region steep,
If that thou weep'st not now, for ever should'st thou weep." *

The Chapel of the Crucifixion occupies a platform about fifteen feet square upon the summit of Calvary; but all traces of the rock have disappeared beneath the accessories of marble mosaics, silken hangings, silver lamps, pictures, and altars which Christian piety has so prodigally lavished there. A silver plate encircles the aperture where we are told the Cross was planted, and as you bend over the orifice—and from its position not even the infidel can approach it otherwise — you become sensible of a strong

* "Dunque ove tu, Signor, di mille rivi,
Sanguignosi il terren lasciasti asperso,
D'amaro pianto almen duo fonti vivi
In si acerba memoria oggi io non verso;
Agghiacciato mio cor, che non derivi,
Per gli occhi, e stille in lagrime converso?
Duro mio cor, che non ti spetri e frangi?
Pianger ben merti ognor, s'ora non piango."
Gerusalemme Liberata.

perfume of roses exhaled from thence; a pious fraud of the Greek monks, who would fain make you believe that those odours were not scattered there by mortal hands. The Latins, whose religious animosity towards the Greeks will not permit of their possessing anything in common with them, have another socket for the planting of the Cross a few inches from the one I have just described, and which they declare to be the identical one. On either side of the altar erected over these holes is a smaller altar, covering the spots where the two malefactors were crucified; that of the repentant thief is on the right hand as you enter upon Calvary from the head of the staircase. Very near to them is a brass grating in the marble pavement, covered over with a silken curtain, which is drawn aside to enable you to see a large fissure in the rock that forms the foundation of the chapel; and this rent is pointed out as having been produced in the awful moment when the dying agonies of Jesus wrung from Him that almost despairing appeal,—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—when the last cry of human suffering was smothered in the fierce convulsion of the elements, and "the veil of the Temple was rent from the top to the

bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent asunder!"

The Chapel of the Crucifixion belongs to the Greeks; the smaller chapel on the right, which is merely portioned off from it by two low pillars, is the property of the Latins; and there, we are told, our Lord was nailed to the Cross. There is a second flight of steps by which you may descend from Calvary into the church; and exactly beneath these two staircases are buried the two first Latin kings of Jerusalem. Their tombs are placed opposite to each other, and few pilgrims, I fancy, pass them by without pausing before that of the heroic Godfrey de Bouillon, the conqueror of Jerusalem, the deliverer of the Holy Sepulchre from Infidel hands —he to whom the sovereignty of the Holy City was awarded as the guerdon of his glorious actions; and who, in the humility which so well became a Christian knight, refused to wear a kingly crown in the place where his Saviour had been crowned with thorns!

I have now made you follow my footsteps all through those localities which have been sanctified as being the scene of the Passion and the Death of the Son of God. I know not whether you will give me credit for the feelings with

which I approached them, and which, I repeat, amounted to an earnest longing to believe in their identity. I had carefully perused Chateaubriand's matchless "Itineraire," and would gladly have participated in his convictions upon that head; but what we are shewn within the walls of Jerusalem, as identical with the Crucifixion, is scarcely reconcileable with what we read in the gospel account of it, or indeed with the topography of the city. We have the evidence of the Apostles, that Calvary was not within the walls of Jerusalem, but a place "nigh unto the city;" and again, our Saviour is alluded to by them as "he who suffered *without the camp!*" Now, the Calvary enclosed within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is not only within the city walls, but, in order to exclude it therefrom, those walls must on that side of the city have taken an eccentric bend inwards, wholly at variance with the harmony of line they exhibit in every other direction. We know that the Jerusalem that witnessed the Mission and Death of Christ was completely destroyed by the soldiers of Titus, within forty years of the Crucifixion; but we know, too, that it was rebuilt by Hadrian about sixty-five years later—that is, in A.D. 135 —and we are told that the new city exactly

occupied the site of the old. It is therefore to be inferred that the walls took the same direction ; it may indeed be presumed that the foundations of the old ones had not been so utterly destroyed but that they might have served as a line of demarcation for the new. But if the walls of the new city were in reality extended, is it probable that the extension would have been made in that direction alone, or selected with a view merely to enclose within its limits a barren rock, such as is the Calvary of the Holy Sepulchre. It has been argued by those who lean to the belief of the identity of the Holy Sites, and plausibly and persuasively argued too, that it is much more reconcileable with probability to suppose that, in the rebuilding of Jerusalem by Hadrian, the city wall should have been extended beyond its former limits, than to imagine that an error could exist upon a subject of such deep and holy interest to the early Christians as the spot where the Saviour died. And that *by them* it must have been handed down accurately from the period when the events took place, to the time of Hadrian, who, we are told, caused heathen monuments to be erected upon what he believed to be the sites of the Crucifixion and entombment of Christ,—namely, a statue

of Venus was placed upon Calvary, and one of Jupiter over the sepulchre. By that measure, the Roman Emperor overreached himself; for if he had adopted it with a view of throwing odium and ridicule upon the events recorded to have passed there, it served as a means to perpetuate their memory, preserve their authenticity, and point them out in the most unquestionable manner to Constantine, whose mother, the Empress Helena, conferred upon them the consecration of the first Christian temples that were ever built; since which time they have been held in sacred veneration by the whole Christian world. This course of reasoning, I repeat, affords most plausible grounds for supporting an argument which during so many centuries has been practicably adhered to by the mass of the Christian community; and until I came here I was content to take upon trust all that I have above stated, and to shape my own convictions thereon; but those convictions have been cruelly disturbed by what I have seen in Jerusalem, and the result of a personal investigation has been the most painful and bewildering doubts.

For here too much has been attempted to be proved, and the superfluity of local evidence forces

upon your recollection the French adage of "Quand on prouve trop on ne prouve rien!" On referring to the Gospels and the Acts, and carefully perusing all they contain, relative to the death and burial of Christ—on sifting the Epistles, which contain the very essence of the Christian faith, and comprise in their admirable charges to the earliest members of Christ's Church all the points of belief, as well as all the observances, that were required to entitle them to become members of it, I cannot find one allusion tending to impress upon the followers of Jesus that the place where He suffered, or the instrument by which He suffered, or the tomb in which He was deposited, and which is, to use the magnificent expression of Chateaubriand, "le seul tombeau qui n'aura rien à rendre à la fin des siècles," were to become objects of reverence to them; there is no injunction to be found implying that the localities of the Passion and Death of Christ should thenceforward be deemed holy by Christians—not an expression by which it can be inferred that after His Resurrection they were cared for or thought of by His followers. The religion of Christ, as inculcated by the Divine Master himself, and disseminated by His disciples, was purely spiritual; it was a subtle essence ab-

stracted from, and independent of, all material tendencies, (and in that respect how different from the Jewish faith!) it was *the verb* which addressed itself to the inmost heart, and not to the eyes of man! But in the days of Constantine, the beautiful simplicity of the apostolic faith had already become deteriorated; the Fathers of the Church had mingled the dross of superstition, fanaticism, and human pride, with the pure essence of the doctrines of Christ; in their zeal for the establishment of Christianity, and the supremacy of the Church of which they themselves were members, they had recourse to pious frauds as well as to holy truths. It was an age in which tangible proofs of the veracity of what they advanced were required; an age of relics, dreams, and miraculous revelations. When they said: "The Son of God was made man, and suffered death upon the cross for our sins, He was burried, and rose from the grave on the third day, &c.," they gave the weight of authority to their words by adding: "And behold, there is Calvary, the place in which He died—this is the very spot where the cross was planted—here is the cross itself—yonder lies His empty tomb—and there is the stone which the angel rolled away from the mouth of the sepulchre!" and so on, until every

circumstance connected with the Passion had obtained a "local habitation and a name."

Such were the conflicting doubts that racked my mind upon a first view of the Holy Sites within the walls of Jerusalem; nor did they diminish during the almost daily visits I subsequently paid to them. I felt almost angry with myself that I *could* dare to doubt when such a mind as Chateaubriand's had unhesitatingly adopted faith in their identity; but I am bound to give you my impressions, such as they are, and not such as they (perhaps) ought to be; and I know you to be too candid to attempt to confound scepticism as to the sites with anything like scepticism of the great fact itself which those sites are meant to commemorate. Very different were my feelings when I passed through the city gates and found myself upon the Mount of Olives!

There the hand of man has not attempted to superimpose its petty adornments upon the great work of God; there the face of nature wears the same aspect that it did eighteen centuries ago; no marble mask interposes to chill the ardour of the pilgrim's faith, as with gushing eyes and throbbing heart he follows the pathway that leads over the hill-side to Bethany, and knows that he is walking in the traces of his Saviour's

footsteps! Yonder, beneath those gnarled and aged olive trees, is the hallowed gloom of Gethsemane, where He prayed that the cup might pass away from Him—the bitter chalice of death which He drained to the dregs to open to us the gates of eternal life!—there the earth was moistened with the drops of His agony and bloody sweat—there He was betrayed, bound, and carried to judgment! And *there*, all my doubts vanished, for these are sites that none can venture to question,—this is holy ground indeed!

We ascended nearly to the summit of the Mount of Olives, and seating ourselves upon the spot where Jesus wept over Jerusalem, obtained not only the best view that is to be had of the Holy City, but one comprising a general *coup d'œil* of some of the most interesting localities upon the face of the globe. From that position, the city and the adjacent hill-country are spread out before you with map-like precision, and the effect they produce upon the gazer is one of mingled sadness and admiration. The strange, unearthly appearance of the barren hills around,—the livid colouring that pervades everything except the blue and cloudless skies,—the utter lifelessness of the landscape,—the unnatural and solemn stillness of the town, where neither sights nor sounds of

human existence are to be distinguished, impart a ghastliness to the aspect of Jerusalem, which made me fancy that I beheld the *phantom of a city*. Thus, the prophet's eye, piercing through the dim veil of futurity, must have contemplated it, when, in the eloquent strains of Lamentation, he said :

"How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!"

Desolate as she looks, however, "the daughter of Sion" is still beautiful when thus beheld from afar; and a strange, mournful interest clings to the very rock upon which she is seated, that is worth all the beauty and brilliancy of more prosperous places. A picturesque turreted wall surrounds the whole city like a girdle of stone, and encloses within its precincts Mount Sion, where the city and palace of David stood; Mount Moriah, the famed locality of the Temple of Solomon, upon whose site the Mosque of Omar now stands; and Mount Acra, on the lower swell of which rises the rock of Calvary. All of these elevations are thickly covered with buildings,—terraced houses, whose flat roofs appear

to bubble with little domes, from whence arise nor hum of human voices, nor curling household smoke to mark the busy haunts of man. Above them all rise the two great domes, one black, the other white, which cover Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre. In that part of the city nearest to the Mount of Olives, and in the midst of a vast open space, embellished with fountains and trees, and surrounded by lofty porticoes and gates, of the most airy and elegant architecture, stands the splendid Mosque of Omar, an octangular construction, crowned with a lofty bronzed dome, the most beautiful of Mahometan temples and second only to that of Mecca in sanctity. There, in the days of Jewish supremacy, stood the Holy of Holies, the temple built by Solomon to contain the Ark of the Covenant; and there succeeded to it the temple built by Herod, the scene of our Saviour's ministry. The city wall forms its boundary on the side nearest to the Mount of Olives, between which, and the elevated site of the Temple, runs a rocky valley filled with thousands of flat tombstones, inscribed with Hebrew characters; this is the gloomy valley of Jehosaphat, the last resting-place where every Israelite yearns to lay his bones (and hundreds annually come from all parts of the

world to die in Jerusalem merely that they may be buried there!) It is also, strange to say, the locality chosen both by the Jews and the Moslems for the awful scene of the Resurrection and final Judgment; and while the former assign to the Messiah, upon that dread day, a position upon the Mount of Olives, from whence he may behold the torrent of souls rolling onward past his feet into the fathomless gulph of Eternity, and select from it those that are worthy of salvation,—the latter place their Prophet, for the same purpose, upon the boundary wall of the Temple overlooking the Valley of Jehosaphat.

In this wall is a large gateway, hermetically closed, and never suffered to be opened, because the Mahometans believe that when the Christians take Jerusalem from them, they will effect their entry by that way. It is called the Golden Gate, and tradition points it out as being the spot by which Jesus entered triumphantly into Jerusalem, on the day when the multitude went before him strewing palm-branches on the way and shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

When we had remained long enough to impress every feature of this interesting landscape upon our memories, we continued the ascent of the Mount of Olives until we reached the ex-

treme summit, which is crowned by a Turkish mosque, originally a Christian church, built by the Empress Helena to mark the spot from whence our Saviour ascended to Heaven. Here again the Imperial lady's discoveries are at variance with the accounts contained in the Gospel Narrative, which state that Jesus "led out his disciples as far as Bethany; and he lifted up his hands and blessed them, and it came to pass that while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into Heaven." Now, the road to Bethany lies along the hill-side, *below* the summit of the Mount of Olives, and it would be a most superfluous lengthening of the way to take in the summit of the Mount. Besides, I cannot but think that if our Saviour had ascended to Heaven from that extreme point it would have been specified by the Apostles who witnessed the Ascension, and that the wording would have been "and he led them to the summit of the Mount of Olives," instead of "he led them to Bethany," which lies far behind Olivet, and is approached by the side of the hill. However, be that as it may, the Empress Helena consecrated the *summit* as the identical spot, and even discovered a miraculous evidence of its being so, in a print of the

Redeemer's foot impressed upon the rock in the moment that he quitted the earth to take his place at the right hand of God. Over that sacred foot-mark she caused a church and monastery to be erected, which were subsequently, under the Saracens, converted into a mosque. The miraculous impression was, however, respected by the Mahometans, and not only did they religiously preserve it within the walls of their own temple, but they have ever since allowed the free access of Christian pilgrims to it; and at this season, these latter flock thither to adore and to take impressions in wax of what they devoutly believe to be the print of the Saviour's foot. We of course visited the spot, and upon narrowly examining the slab of rock surrounded by a marble framework, which forms the centre of a chamber attached to the mosque, we could trace out something that bears a faint resemblance to the sole of a man's naked foot. An old woman was busily employed in taking impressions of it in bee's wax, for a crowd of pilgrims assembled there, and eagerly offered her services to us in the same way; assuring us that these waxen copies are endued with holy and miraculous properties, by which the body and the soul are equally benefited. But we were

not tempted to put her services into requisition, and we quitted the spot with very different impressions from those with which she would fain have furnished us.

The mosque possesses a lofty minaret, which every traveller ascends in order to enjoy from its summit a view of the most remarkable and interesting localities in Bible and Gospel History. From thence our eyes wandered over the dreary environs of Jerusalem, and the whole of the desolate hill-country of Judea, vainly seeking in the Land of Promise for a green and smiling spot upon which they might rest; until far eastward a break in the hills affords a glimpse of the site of Jericho, and the river Jordan rolling onwards through a belt of verdure to the Dead Sea. And further on the awful lake itself, whose waters cover the guilty cities, appeared like a deep blue mirror bounded on the east by the lofty mountains of Moab, which rise like a wall upon the horizon, shutting out all else beyond, and, unlike every other chain of mountains in the world, present no indentations along their summit. Their colouring is as remarkable as their form; a beautiful and intense azure tint pervades the whole, and causes the heavens to look pale when contrasted with that portion of the earth. Beyond

that mysterious barrier lie regions which no European has yet ventured to traverse—the accursed lands of Moab and of Ammon are there, and those parts of Arabia Petræa which, to this day, are as savage and insecure as when peopled by the first descendants of Ishmael.

I will not attempt to convey to you an idea of the singular and almost awful charm produced by a view of the localities I have just enumerated. Their names, the sacred associations called forth by them, the wonderful and thrilling events of which they are the landmarks, the unearthly, dream-like aspect of the whole scene, affected me so powerfully, and in such a strange manner, that I felt like one under the influence of a vision; and I did not recover my normal state until we had nearly reached the base of the Mount of Olives on our return to Jerusalem. There a fit of indignation brought me to myself. We were made to dismount, not far from the Garden of Gethsemane, at the head of a flight of marble steps, which lead to a subterranean chapel, decorated with a quantity of silver lamps, chandeliers, ostrich eggs, silk hangings, and some bad pictures; and this we were told is the tomb of the Virgin Mary and of Joseph, her husband, and there they both lie buried. For, although

it is authentic that after the death of her Divine Son, and in accordance with His dying injunctions uttered from the Cross to her and to "the Disciple he best loved," the Mother of Christ retired to the protection of St. John, and died in his house at Ephesus, (of which place he was the first Bishop) and was buried there, yet the monks here assure you that, immediately after the burial of the Virgin, her body was transported by angels through the air to Jerusalem, and deposited in the spot I have just described, that she might rest in the place where her Son had died; and that when her tomb at Ephesus was opened, nothing was found in it but her grave-clothes folded up, and fresh as though they had never enveloped the remains of mortality!

And it is by legends such as this that the monks would add to the sacred interest of the Holy Land!

CHAPTER X.

BETHLEHEM OF JUDEA.—GROTTO OF THE NATIVITY.—GROTTO OF ST. JEROME.—LEGEND OF THE VIRGIN.—RACHEL'S TOMB. — MOUNT SION. — CŒNACULUM. — LAWRENCE COSTIGAN. — THE POTTER'S FIELD.— POOL OF SILOAM.—JEWISH TOMBS.— GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.—AN ENTHUSIAST.—WALLS OF THE TEMPLE.—ANTIQUE MASONRY.—THE PLACE OF WAILING.— THE GREEK PATRIARCH.—THE HARAM SCHEREEF.—ARMENIAN CONVENT.

Jerusalem, April 5, 1846.

The day after I closed my last letter we rode to "Bethlehem of Judea," to visit the birth-place of Christ; for there the Holy Infant first beheld the light, and even should the spot consecrated by the pious and indefatigable Helena *not* be the exact one of the Nativity, we know that at all events it must be somewhere near, as the poor little Bethlehem of to-day occupies the same ground which the Bethlehem of Herod's time did; and very small is the space which it covers, although once possessing the sounding appellation of the City of David. After the sterile sadness of Jerusalem, the country around Bethlehem looks absolutely smiling; and there is a pastoral cha-

racter in the green fields divided by hedgerows, and the large flocks of long-eared goats and large-tailed sheep tended by their ragged guardians, that reminds one of the shepherds to whom angel voices announced the glad tidings of the Nativity, and of the still more antique idyll of which this was the locality,—Ruth gleaning in the fields of Boaz. Olive plantations abound in the environs, and the sides of the hill upon which the town stands present a succession of cultivated terraces, which, from the force of contrast, gladden the eye and heart, so utterly saddened by the blasted aspect of this barren land. The population is entirely Christian, and their principal branch of industry consists in the manufacture of chaplets, crucifixes, scallop-shells and pilgrim's staves, in mother-of-pearl, which are sold to the Christian pilgrims in Jerusalem, and carried by them in quantities to every part of the Catholic world.

There is a Latin Convent at Bethlehem, and a church attached to it, which belongs, like the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to the Latins, Greeks, and Armenians; and the divided possession of which is an apple of discord to the three conflicting faiths——and this, too, upon a spot where that Holy event took place which was announced from above as bringing " peace and good-

will to all men." There are some very handsome columns in the church, and above them a carved frieze is pointed out, said to be composed of the famous cedar-wood of Lebanon. Beyond these objects, it contains nothing remarkable; for of course I do not include the Chapel of the Nativity, which is beneath its floor, and to which we were conducted by the flickering lights of tapers, down two flights of stone stairs.

The Gospels do not tell us that our Saviour was born in a subterraneous grotto, although they specify that he was laid in a manger. However, we are made aware on visiting the Chapel of the Nativity that the inn in which the Virgin brought forth, and the manger which she converted into a cradle, were both underground. The Grotto is a long narrow chamber encrusted everywhere with marble, the walls partly covered with silk, and having a recess at the further end lighted by a quantity of silver lamps; in that recess the child was born, and a marble star in the pavement—doubtless in commemoration of the star which led on the Wise Men to Bethlehem, and only stopped when they arrived in the presence of the Divine Infant—marks the spot, and is inscribed with the legend: "*Hic natus est Jesus Christus de Virgo.*"

A few paces from it, a descent of two steps

leads to the manger, cased within and without with marble, which cradled the new-born Jesus. The spots were Joseph sat during the birth, and where the Magi were stationed when they made their offerings, are severally pointed out; but besides these, many other sites are comprised within the dark regions of the Nativity. The pit into which the bodies of the murdered Innocents were thrown, is there; and in the convent above, we were shown the hand of one of them, and the tongue of another, both relics enchased in gold and pearls. The grotto so long inhabited by St. Jerome, and in which he made the Latin translation of the Bible known by the name of the Vulgate, is contiguous to the Chapel of the Nativity; and adjoining it is his tomb—for there he died—and the tombs also of Saint Paula and Saint Eudosia, two noble Roman ladies, mother and daughter, who, having in the early ages of Christianity embraced the faith of Jesus, abandoned the world and its pleasures, their country and their kindred, to fix themselves in the spot where the Saviour had first appeared upon earth, and there pass the remainder of their lives in solitude and holy contemplation.

So much for the Holy places of the Nativity. The monks received us very courteously, im-

pressed every object upon our attention with most pious care, and offered to conduct us to another grotto, which had been sanctified by the presence of the Mother of God, and has ever since possessed miraculous powers. The legend avers that the Virgin, one day, in the first infancy of her son, took shelter in this grotto from the rain, and that her milk overflowing fell to the ground, and left there sundry white marks, which are shown to this day. But those holy drops did not fall to the earth without a purpose—they endued it with the power of bestowing upon women in whose bosoms the fountain of maternity had been dried up, the means of nursing their children. A little powder scraped from the grotto mixed in water, and drank with faith in its efficacy, produces the desired result; and great is the demand for this miraculous powder made by the female pilgrims visiting Bethlehem. I was not tempted even to see the place, for the mere idea of mixing up these most questionable monkish legends with the indisputable and sacred facts that have sanctified Bethlehem to the hearts and understandings of all believers, as Holy ground, was revolting to me. I went to visit the favoured spot which the birth of the Saviour of mankind invested with the same sacred interest that his

death conferred upon Jerusalem,—(and in saying this I do not confine myself to the Grotto of the Nativity, I allude to Bethlehem at large) — and I did not wish my mind to be disturbed by the indignant resistance it always opposes to the detail of petty miracles which have nothing to do with the history of the great work of the Redemption. We therefore eschewed two grottoes that were pressed upon our attention, and after having walked through the town, and made some purchases of rosaries and crucifixes, we returned to Jerusalem.

The distance is between six and seven miles; and in that space is contained a monument dear to the hearts of the Jews as covering the dust of the wife and mother of two of their patriarchs. The tomb of Rachel is surmounted with a dome very much resembling those that mark the place of sepulture of Arab Sheikhs and Santons, and looks in good repair—too good indeed to be the identical tomb; but the monument may have been renewed, and we know that it is in the locality specified in Holy Writ as having been the place where Joseph's mother died and was buried; for these were the words spoken by Jacob to his son to that effect: "And as for me; when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in

the Land of Canaan, in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath; and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem."

We returned to Jerusalem by Mount Sion, passing by the great cistern, or pool outside of the city wall, in which the fair Bathsheba was bathing, when David, from the roof of his palace on the eminence above, first beheld her and became enamoured of her beauty. But oh! who could recognize in the dreary hill we traversed —(the one half of it, which is within the walls, covered with the wretched, fœtid streets of the Jewish quarter; the outside and larger portion, a barren and desolate rock, peopled only by the dead, for there is situated the Strangers' burying-ground) — the Sion of the Royal Psalmist? On its summit is one of those doubtful monuments which everybody visits, and everybody quits with a mind full of controversial tendencies. It is called the Tomb of David; and there, we are told, the mortal remains of the good king were deposited. The Turks have built a mosque over it, and therefore the entrance of the sepulchral chamber is interdicted to Christians; but we were taken into an adjoining room and shown a little niche in the wall, in which a lamp is perpetually

burning, and which, we were assured, marks the place where reposes the head of "the sweet singer of Israel." Under the same roof is the Cœnaculum, or chamber in which our Saviour is said to have partaken of the Last Supper with His disciples; but we were not told how it escaped the general destruction, which forty years later laid in the dust every stone of the city after its capture by Titus! The site may be the same, but nothing short of a miracle could have preserved the original chamber intact; yet thus is one called upon at every turn in Jerusalem to abnegate one's reasoning powers, and blindly accept convictions which are wholly at variance with the records left to us by history.

I would not pass by the Strangers' cemetery on Mount Sion without seeking for the grave of Lawrence Costigan, the adventurous young Irishman who perished a few years ago in his gallant attempt to navigate the Dead Sea, and to penetrate beyond those inhospitable shores which hitherto have opposed an insurmountable barrier to the curiosity of wanderers from the West. Poor Costigan! as I plucked away the rank weeds that overspread his lowly tomb and render his epitaph now nearly illegible, I could not but think of how often the sad hearts in his far-dis-

tant home must have yearned towards this neglected grave, and how dreadfully must the anguish of bereavement have been augmented to them by the mystery that enveloped his last moments. Besides, his death involved more than private suffering—it was a public loss; for, had he lived, he might have revealed the secrets of those regions which no other European has ever yet explored. I am told that the Maltese sailor who accompanied him, declares that they saw ruins at the bottom of the water—the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah!—but he is such an ignorant and besotted creature, that no dependence can be placed upon any of his assertions.

Now that I have traversed the dreadful roads leading to Jerusalem, I can appreciate the courage and energy of poor Costigan in bringing over them, as he did, a boat from Beyrout for his luckless voyage of discovery. I only hope that his example may stimulate some others to undertake the same enterprise, but with better means of success. Whoever ventures to navigate the shores of that awful Lake,—whose waters, in harmony with the sinister name it bears, contain within them nothing that breathes the breath of life,—must take everything for the sustenance of existence with them, and, above all, water in

abundance; for it is supposed that the want of that first necessity, and the desperate expedient of replacing it by the bituminous water of the Lake, was the immediate cause of Costigan's death.

* * * * *

A ride round the walls of Jerusalem is one of the most interesting excursions the place affords; and, as I have already said, *there* no doubts overcloud the mind in its eager search for the sites made holy by the events of Biblical and Gospel History. We commenced our circuit from the Jaffa, or Pilgrim's Gate; and, passing southward by the pool of Bethesda, we reached the ravine known as the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, and followed it until we arrived at the south-west corner of Mount Sion, where it takes an easterly direction. To the right, as you traverse it, is to be seen on an elevated part of the bank "the Potter's field," which was purchased with the thirty pieces of silver paid for our Saviour's blood, and which has ever since been held in execration by all men as ground accursed. A charnel-house is attached to it, into which bodies that can obtain no other burial are thrown; and the carrion bird, hovering midway in the air above, stamps the scene with a character in unison with its sangui-

nary associations. Not far from it is shown the cave in which the apostles concealed themselves after the Crucifixion, when those persecutions commenced which led to the martyrdom of so many among them. Further on is to be seen the well of Nehemiah; and when you have reached the south-east corner of Mount Sion, and follow the ravine to the north, a white mulberry-tree planted on a ledge to the left, on the very spur of Mount Sion, marks the spot where the prophet Isaiah was sawed in two.

The next object of note is the Pool of Siloam, where Jesus told the blind man to wash himself, and that his sight should be restored: and to this day the blind and the maimed have faith in the healing powers of that spring; for never did I pass by the spot without seeing the double flight of steps by which you descend to the pool, encumbered by afflicted creatures, who go there believing that they will cast off their infirmities and leave them behind in the hallowed waters.

There the brook Cedron flows through the ravine, but its waters are now dried up, and we could only discover the rocky bed which wintry rains convert into a running stream. Beyond it, to the right, is the gloomy valley of Jehoshaphat, which lies between Mount Moriah and the Mount

of Olives, and is, as I have told you, the great burial-place of the Jews. Its rocky sides are full of excavated tombs, and it is literally paved with flat grave-stones; amongst which, the eye is attracted by four large monuments of an antique and most solid appearance, cut out of the rock, and presenting various and conflicting specimens of architectural embellishment. These are the tombs of Absalom, the rebellious son of David—of Jehoshaphat, one of the kings of Judah—of the prophet Zachariah—and of St. James, the brother of our Saviour, and the first bishop of Jerusalem.

Leaving to wiser heads to determine whether these monuments really are what tradition asserts them to be, or whether the style of architecture of the three first precludes the possibility of their being Jewish tombs of the antiquity attributed to them, (a period when Egyptian architecture, and not Grecian, as they are, was most likely to have prevailed amongst the Jews,) I shall merely say that their appearance is exceedingly striking in that valley of death; and even if they are *not* what during ages immemorial they have passed for, they look as though they *ought* to be the tombs of kings and prophets. Further on, still continuing a northerly direction, the spot is

shown where our Saviour was taken into custody by the officers of the Chief Priests; and a foot-mark imprinted in the rock is pointed out, and averred to be the impression left there by the Redeemer in the moment when He was betrayed into the hands of His enemies. Near to it is the Garden of Gethsemane, whither He had retired to watch and pray with His disciples in preparation for His approaching doom: but the *garden* no longer merits that appellation;—it is a small field enclosed within a low wall of loose stones, and contains nothing but eight olive-trees of great antiquity. The largest is singled out as being the one under which Jesus was betrayed; and its lower branches are completely stripped by the Ctian pilgrims, who consider its leaves among the holiest relics that can be brought away from the Holy Land. I, too, gathered some of them, which I shall preserve with feelings of veneration in no degree inferior to those entertained by these simple-hearted devotees; for although persuaded that the actual olive-trees of Gethsemane, all-aged though they be, do not count above half the years assigned to them, yet, as it is a well-known fact that the olive-tree reproduces itself, I am equally persuaded that they are off-shoots from the identical trees under whose shade our Saviour was

wont to retire and meditate, and that they cover the ground so often pressed by His footsteps.

Descending a steep path, we next came to the spot, outside St. Stephen's gate, which is consecrated by the blood of the first Christian Martyr; and where he who afterwards became the greatest apostle and advocate of Christianity, St. Paul himself, stood by and applauded the deed, and, in token of his approval, preserved the raiment of the most active among the murderers.

Following the line of walls in a northerly direction, we reached the gate of Damascus, which terminated our circuit; and just as we were about to re-enter the city by that way, our progress was arrested by an accidental meeting with a countryman of our own, an extraordinary enthusiast, whose appearance struck us much from the dignity of his bearing and the manly beauty of his countenance. He was apparently about thirty-five years of age, and was dressed in the oriental costume; but the fashion of his beard, and the manner in which he wore his long fair hair divided on his forehead and falling underneath his turban in waves over his shoulders, together with the delicacy of his complexion and features, showed him to be foreign to the people of this land, and gave something picturesque to

the character of his head—something that reminded me of Carlo Dolce's representations of our Saviour. Seeing our guide salute this man familiarly, I asked who he was, and, upon learning that he was an Englishman, I was induced to stop and speak to him. We learned from the stranger that he has now been ten years in Jerusalem, and that he intends never to leave it. He is in daily expectation of the second coming of Christ, the return of the lost tribes, and the gathering together of the Jews as a nation; and all this, he avers, must inevitably take place in the present generation, and he confidently hopes, within his own lifetime. The signs of the times are his guides, and the Bible is his only library. I asked him if many of the Jews in Jerusalem shared in his convictions; but his answer was, that, as yet, he has found no persons who exactly think as he does, and that therefore he has gradually ceased all communication with others, and lives entirely alone in a small habitation on Mount Sion. In reply to another question, he told me that he had broken asunder every *earthly* tie, that he has put aside all the affections of the flesh, and that, since his establishment here, he has never once communicated with his family in England. "And

have you no longing to hear of your parents?" said I; "None—for I am here in the house of my Father!" was his reply. Our guide says that he is a most worthy man, and was much esteemed by the late Bishop Alexander, although looked upon by him as more than half mad.

After riding round the city walls, we made the circuit of those surrounding the ancient site of the Temple, and which now form the barrier that excludes all but Mussulmans from entering the sacred precincts of the Mosque of Omar. I have told you that the "Holy of Holies," built by Solomon, occupied a rocky platform on the summit of Mount Moriah, and that the Saracen conquerors of Palestine chose the same position for the splendid mosque they constructed in honour of the then newly invented religious code promulgated by their Prophet Mahomet. Like their predecessors the Jews, they surrounded their sanctuary with a strong and lofty wall, and it would even appear that they made use of part of the foundations of the ancient wall of the Temple to base their new barrier upon. This supposition, advanced by antiquaries and men of science, is borne out by the appearance of the masonry at the base of the southern

wall of the Temple, where the lower tiers present an aspect so wholly at variance with the other portions, that it is evident they must belong to another age and another race of artizans. They are formed of enormous blocks of stone, such as are only to be found in the masonic constructions of the ancients, and are sufficiently ponderous and strong to have resisted even the destructive attacks of Titus's soldiery. Some persons unhesitatingly attribute this Cyclopean remnant to the first building of the Temple, and declare it to be a portion of Solomon's wall: but the more general belief is, that it dates from the third and last rebuilding of the Temple by Herod; and that in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, the demolition may not have been executed so completely to the letter, but that some fragments of the foundation of the Temple walls escaped the fiat that doomed the whole to be razed to the ground.* Be that as it may, the basement

* This apparent variance with the prediction of our Saviour, that *not one stone should remain standing upon another,* may thus be reconciled. The prophecy may have referred to what was *above the surface,* whereas these foundation fragments lie *below the surface* of the platform upon which the Temple stood.

tiers of the southern wall are decidedly not Saracenic; and the Jews of Jerusalem confidently believe them to have formed part of their ancient and beloved sanctuary. So strong is this conviction in their minds, that every Friday afternoon (the eve of their Sabbath) they repair thither to weep and lament over the fall of the Temple, and to pray for its restoration; and that portion of the walls has derived from this affecting custom the designation of "the Place of Wailing." It was the belief of the ancient Jews that the prayers offered up to the Most High within the precincts of the Temple walls, ascended at once to the Throne of Grace, and were propitiatory of the Divine Clemency; and, like the rest of their religious tenets, this belief has remained unchanged until the present day: for although the walls have been for ages closed against the remnant of God's chosen people by their oppressors, they still gather round the forbidden spot, and, pressing their lips against the ancient stone-work, breathe through its crevices the aspirations of their unchanging hearts. I visited the spot on the day and at the hour when this sad gathering takes place, and I could have wept at beholding the descendants of Israel, aliens, as it were, in the land of their fathers,

bearing the marks of oppression and proscription upon their timid brows, shut out from the high places of their antique worship, yet clinging, with the fond fidelity which acquires strength from persecution, to the belief and the observances of their ancestors, and crowding with bursting hearts around that antique remnant of their lost glory to pray for its restoration. The women, enveloped from head to foot in their large white cotton wrapping-sheets, with their faces pressed to the wall, their outspread arms embracing it, mingling sighs and tears with their prayers, looked like disembodied spirits from another world, haunting the spot to which their affections had clung while in the flesh. The men, mostly aged, and each bearing in his hand a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures, were seated in a line upon the pavement opposite to the wall, rocking themselves to and fro as they recited, in that monotonous chaunt peculiar to the Jewish form of worship, those portions of their Sacred Writings which predict the termination of the long sufferings of the Children of Israel, and the final restoration of the wandering tribes to the Daughter of Sion as a people and a kingdom. The scene was a melancholy and striking one, and irresistibly recalled to my memory the

beautiful lines in which Lord Byron sketched the desolation of the Jews.

Oh ! weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,
Whose shrines are desolate,—whose land a dream ;
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell,
Mourn, where their God hath dwelt, the godless dwell !

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet,
And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet ?
And Judah's melody once more rejoice
The hearts that leaped before its heavenly voice ?

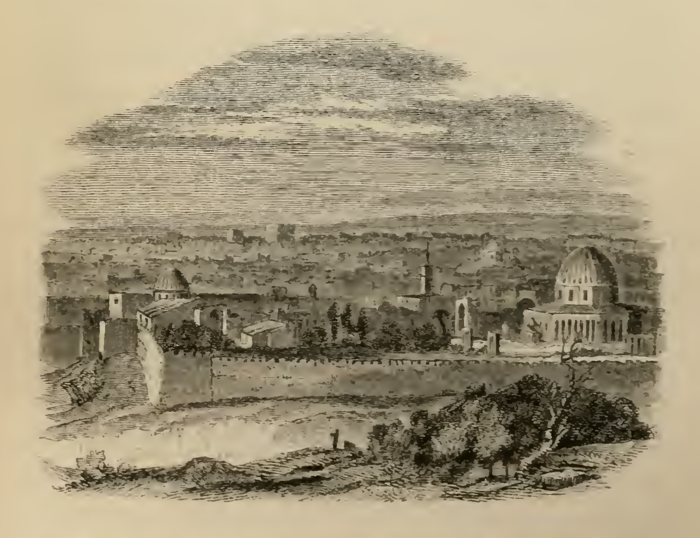
Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest ?
The wild dove hath her nest—the fox its cave—
Mankind their country—*Israel but the grave !*

* * * * * *

The Russian Consul-General at Beyrout had given me a letter of introduction to the Greek Patriarch here, " Sa Béatitude, le Révérendissime Père Cyril;" and, previous to making an excursion to the Dead Sea, I went to deliver my credentials, in the hope that the Reverend Father's interest would open for me the gates of the Greek convent of Saint Saba in those desolate regions, which derives its great interest from being the first Christian monastery that was established in Palestine. The Patriarch inhabits—not a cell, but a very pretty little apartment in the upper

part of the Greek convent of Jerusalem, and received us with all the courtesy and all the ceremony incidental to Oriental visits. He is a handsome and dignified-looking old man, a native of the Fanar (the Greek quarter of Constantinople), and speaks nothing but Greek and Turkish. Pipes, coffee, sweetmeats, and sherbet were served to us in abundance, and our reverend host offered us all sorts of courteous attentions for the approaching fêtes of the Greek Holy Week (which this year falls exactly one week later than that of the Catholics); but, as we shall leave Jerusalem immediately after the Latin celebration of the Passion, we cannot profit by his willingness to oblige us in that particular. Had it depended upon his own volition alone, the Patriarch assured me that I should have had free permission to visit the monastery of Santa Saba; but the order which excludes all womankind from its walls is imperative, and admits of no exceptions whatever, or of any rights of favour being exercised, even by the Patriarch himself. Such an argument was unanswerable, and I was afterwards consoled for my disappointment by being assured that the refusal of admission to Santa Saba had spared me several hours' additional riding over the most execrable roads even in Palestine.

The roof of the Greek Convent commands the finest panoramic view of Jerusalem and of its immediate environs that is to be obtained in the city; but the best view of the Mosque of Omar, or El Sakhara, is unquestionably to be had from the terrace that surmounts the so-called House of Pilate, where the Turkish commandant resides. By his courtesy we were enabled to behold all that is permitted to Christian eyes of the beauties of the Holy Mosque, and what we saw in this, the nearest approach we could obtain towards it, appeared to us infinitely to surpass all that



we had seen of the mosques of Constantinople and Cairo. The large space called the Haram

Schereef, in the midst of which it stands, is embellished with fountains, trees, and praying-places covered with domes: the form and proportions of the building itself are at once grand and graceful; the lofty gateways are in perfect harmony with it; and behind the great Mosque is a smaller one, called El Aksar, divided from it by a fountain surrounded with orange-trees, which in any other spot but the overwhelming vicinity of El Sakhara would be deemed beautiful. One solitary palm-tree waves its feathery head within the Haram Schereef; and, strange to say, the enclosure contains a grotto consecrated by the Mahometans to our Saviour by the title of *Seyd Aissa* (the Lord Jesus), and one of their traditions points out that there He was wont to teach and to pray.

From the presence of Father Cyril we repaired to the Armenian Convent, which possesses attached to it the most beautiful church in Jerusalem. It is erected over the spot where St. James, the brother of our Saviour, was decapitated, and where his head is said to be buried. The interior decorations of the church are in the Byzantine taste, rich even to gorgeousness; and the mixture it exhibits of precious marbles, of splendid damask hangings, of those beautiful enamelled oriental tiles which form such elegant mosaics, of

the most exquisite doors inlaid with ivory, mother-of-pearl, silver, and tortoise-shell, of pictures, and antique enamels representing Scriptural subjects, of chandeliers and silver lamps, together with the splendid accessories of the priests' dresses, (for they were celebrating one of their great religious ceremonies when we arrived, and the church was crowded with pilgrims,) presented the most brilliant and interesting *coup d'œil.* The Armenians possess the finest garden in Jerusalem; indeed everything belonging to them bears the stamp of wealth, solidity, and decorum; and the very cats that were feeding at the convent gates looked sleek and canonical like the monks themselves.

CHAPTER XI.

EXCURSION. — BEDOUIN GUARD. — BETHANY. — MOUNTAIN OF TEMPTATION. — JERICHO.— APPLES OF THE DEAD SEA. — UNWELCOME VISITORS.—THE RIVER JORDAN.—THE DEAD SEA. —TOMB OF MOSES.—INDIAN DERWEESH.—TURKISH PILGRIMS. —SHEIKH HAMED.—BEDOUIN HOSPITALITY.— JEWS OF JERUSALEM.— EUROPEAN CONSULS. — SOCIETY.— THE HOLY WEEK. —CEREMONIES.— GOOD FRIDAY.— CELEBRATION OF THE CRUCIFIXION.— BATTLE UPON CALVARY. — RESCUE. — THE PASHA OF JERUSALEM. —TERMINATION OF THE FRAY. — CEREMONY CONCLUDED.—EASTER COMMEMORATION.—PILGRIM'S DIPLOMA.

Jerusalem, April 12, 1846.

YESTERDAY we returned from an excursion to the Jordan and the Dead Sea, which occupied three days, and has fatigued me more than a month's journeying would have done in Europe. Such is the state of insecurity for travellers in this unhappy country that we were obliged to be escorted by a Bedouin Sheikh and twenty-five of his tribe well armed, in order to save us from depredations on the road. This precaution is indispensable, and the arrangement of it is admi-

rably regulated by the English Consul here. There are two tribes who undertake the duty, but they are never allowed to enter Jerusalem, with the exception of their respective Sheikhs, who come into the city to receive their directions from the Consul, and become answerable for the safety of the party employing them. The price fixed for their services is one hundred piastres for each traveller (about one pound English), which is paid to the Sheikh, who makes the distribution he chooses among his men. Nothing can be better conducted than the whole affair; it is organized quite in military style; all the men are well armed—a party precedes and a party follows the cavalcade, and on each side there are skirmishers, who cut a sort of precautionary flourish. But at night they condense their forces and form a guard round the tents, which is after all more essential than their protection during the day; as much more is to be apprehended from thieving than from actual violence.

We left Jerusalem on the morning of the sixth, and found our escort waiting for us outside of the gates. The Sheikh (Hamed), one of the finest young men I ever saw, would have afforded an admirable model to an artist for an Ishmael; he wore nothing but a white Arab shirt and

turban, and a pair of red slippers; but the grace with which they sat upon him, the freedom with which he carried his two long guns, his yataghan, and pistols, and the air of command with which he strode over the ground with the fleetness of a greyhound, were highly characteristic and picturesque. His men with their Arab weapons, their ragged shirts, their Keffiehs* bound round their foreheads with a coil of rope, and the ends hanging over their bronzed cheeks, looked so wild and desperate that it required some little courage to consign oneself to the tender mercies of such a dare-devil looking gang.

Our way lay though the village of Bethany, one of the most interesting localities in the environs of Jerusalem, not only as being identified with so many of the events related in the Christian Narrative, but as having been the spot to which the predilections of our Saviour's heart so often led Him, when He was wont to quit the city and repose Himself in the bosom of friendship with Lazarus and his sisters. It was in Bethany that

* The red and yellow handkerchiefs worn by the Bedouins on their heads. They are folded crossways and fastened round the forehead with a piece of rope made of the fibres of the palm-tree, and the ends, falling over the cheeks and neck, serve to shelter them from the ardent rays of the sun.

His great miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead was performed; and it was on the road thither that, after His victory over death and the grave, the crucified Redeemer quitted the earth and ascended to heaven. The house of Martha and Mary, and the tomb of Lazarus, are still shown; but although all travellers appear to have agreed in distrusting their identity, the sacred interest that clings to the spot cannot be lessened by these doubts; and I, for my part, rode through the humble Arab village with feelings which the great places of the earth would have been powerless to elicit.

You can imagine nothing so execrable as the road from Bethany to Jericho, through a hill country, which becomes more bleak and inhospitable at every step as you advance, until utter desolation marks the scene. It was in this dreary locality that Jesus placed his parable of the Good Samaritan; and it would appear from the precautions at present taken to traverse it, that the place and the people have not improved in character during eighteen hundred years.

The hills of Judea present the most extraordinary aspect, and their whimsical forms, together with their dreary sterility, suggest the idea that they must have been produced either by

earthquake or a deluge. One among them is singled out as being the Mountain of Temptation, to the summit of which the Devil conducted our Saviour, and " showed him from thence all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, &c. &c." The stern locality looks well adapted for such a scene, and answers perfectly to the Evangelist's description, except that the prospect from it is not as boundless as we have been thereby led to suppose; for it is only on reaching the last of this sombre succession of hills, that a view of the plain of Jericho is to be obtained; but there the prospect becomes splendid, from the extent of the plain, and the magnificent outline of the Mountains of Moab rising upon the horizon like a wall, and appearing to be further removed from us than when we saw them from the summit of the Mount of Olives.

After a weary ride of seven hours, we reached the site of ancient Jericho, and pitched our tents for the night beneath some straggling trees which served as pickets for our horses. No signs of human habitations now remain there, except an old ruined tower and the vestiges of an Arab village, which had been burned to the ground by the retreating army of Ibrahim Pasha, in the late Syrian war,—and, a little further re-

moved, a deserted cemetery,—so long deserted, that it is abandoned even by the wild dog and the chacal. The sandy soil produces no sort of vegetation, except a species of thorny shrub, which grows to a considerable height, and, like the orange-tree, bears flowers and fruit at the same time. The flowers are of a pale purplish hue and resemble those of the potato, but are somewhat larger; the fruit is a pod about the size of a pigeon's egg, but perfectly round, and of a bright gold colour when ripe. We gathered some of them, and upon breaking the rind of one to ascertain what it contained, the sudden effort caused the expulsion of a dark-coloured, acrid powder, which flew into our eyes and caused us the most intolerable anguish. I can only compare the pain we endured to that inflicted by vitriol; and this circumstance, coupled with the beautiful appearance of the fruit, so tempting and deceptive in its exterior, yet all ashes and bitterness within, convinced us that we had fallen upon the famed apples of the Dead Sea—and that they are not, as many have supposed, *a fable*, but a bitter and wounding reality.

Our Bedouins, like true Arabs, rested themselves after the fatigues of their hot day's jour-

ney, by dancing and singing until a late hour of the night. Amongst other evolutions, they executed a sort of sword dance, which was a most characteristic exhibition; and the noise they made, added to the watch-fires they had lighted, served to keep off all dangerous intruders from the premises. Monsieur de Lamartine alludes to having seen lions, panthers, and other wild beasts on the plain of Jericho and the banks of the Jordan; but the only living things seen by ourselves, of which we had cause to complain, or that could have created an unpleasant sensation, were the black-beetles that infested our tents. They were of a size, and in swarms that rendered them (to me) perfectly terrifying; and my philosophy was not proof against the infliction of finding two monsters careering over my bed at the moment when, tired and sleepy, I was just about to lie down for the night. That black apparition was more than sufficient to murder sleep; and it was not until I had contrived a sort of bag to tie myself up in, head and all, and thus preclude all possibility of contact with the odious creatures, that I could be prevailed upon again to approach my bed.

On the following morning, two hours' hot ride across the sterile plain brought us to the banks

of the Jordan. No description of vegetation had greeted our eyes until we came within a few yards of the narrow stream, where a sort of "Oasis in the desert" appeared; for its rapid and turbid waters rush onwards between banks green and luxuriant with poplar and willow trees, and a variety of clustering shrubs. We halted beneath this delightful shade, (which appeared doubly delightful after the overwhelming heat we had experienced in our ride through the plain of Jericho), and the spot where we dismounted is pointed out by tradition as the very place where our Saviour stepped into the stream and received baptism from the hands of St. John. Indeed there is every reason to suppose that the assertion is correct, for the current is so extremely violent, that it would be impossible to venture into the river with any chance of safety, except in that particular part of it, and close to the bank, where the overhanging branches afford a sort of safeguard and are clung to by those whom the overwhelming torrent sweeps resistlessly along. It is the place also where the thousands of pilgrims who annually throng to the Jordan on Easter Monday to be baptized, immerse themselves, and where, upon each occasion, many of them are drowned. But that contin-

gency is not contemplated by them in the light of a misfortune, for they devoutly believe that those who thus perish will go straight to Paradise. Their confidence in the purifying powers of the Jordan has also led to another superstition; they carefully preserve the shirt which they have worn during their immersion, in order that they may be buried in it; because their firm belief is, that should they in the next world be condemned to the flames of purgatory, the contact of those saving waters would immediately quench the fire, and rescue their souls from eternal perdition.

I was not tempted to take a dip in the Jordan; the muddy quality of the water and the violence of the current deterred me from making the attempt; but while the gentlemen bathed, I wandered along the banks, and returned from my ramble with a provision of willow wands cut for me by Sheikh Hamed, and a bottle of Jordan water, which Mohammed had carefully sealed up in order that I may take it to Europe.

After an hour's halt by the sacred stream, we remounted our horses, and two hours more brought us to the shores of the Dead Sea. The heat was intense; the sunbeams appeared to have scorched the thirsty earth into burning sand,

producing no signs of vegetable life, except a low stunted shrub with pale ash-coloured leaves and grey blossoms—a sapless, scentless, widowed-looking thing, which, even in that wilderness, held out no temptation to the hand to stretch forth and gather it. The blue waters of the lake rolled heavily as molten lead upon the shore, and left there a creamy foam, which I tasted, and found to be intolerably nauseous; it it is not honestly bitter, nor salt, but has a sulphureous, acid flavour that carries with it an idea of foulness — the moral foulness of the guilty cities that lie entombed beneath its waves! There is, however, great beauty and grandeur in the scene; and if the mind is awe-struck by the recollections of guilt and punishment it calls forth, and recognizes in the desolate and lifeless aspect of all around the terrible traces of the Divine anathema, it is no less impressed with wonder at the constancy and courage evinced by the Children of Israel, who, under the guidance of Moses, obtained in this dreary region their first glimpse of the Land of Promise; and, *unpromising* as the appearance must have been, when compared with their recollections of the fertile valley of Egypt, and of the land of Goshen, still had the resolution to advance! For behind those

mysterious mountains that enclose the Dead Sea like a mighty frame, lie the plains of Moab, from whence Moses ascended to "the top of Pisgah that is over against Jericho," and was shown by the Lord the land which He had sworn unto Abraham and Isaac and Jacob to give to their seed; and which He had suffered Moses to behold with his eyes, saying to him: "Thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the Children of Israel!" And the paths we have just traversed were probably the identical ones trodden by them, when, the days of their mourning for Moses terminated, they were led on by Joshua across the Jordan to take possession of the inheritance given to them by their God!

While I rode forward towards the hills we were to cross on our return to Jerusalem, the gentlemen lingered behind to bathe in the Dead Sea, and to test the truth of all that travellers have related of the buoyant qualities of its waters. The account they gave me perfectly coincided with what I had previously read; on plunging into the lake and assuming the ordinary swimming position, they found that they were unable to maintain it—their legs appeared to be thrown up above their heads—to stand

upright in the water was an impossibility; they were immediately tripped up, as it were, and turned round upon their backs, where they might have floated to all eternity! Monsieur J—, who was with us, declared that the acridity of the water blistered his skin; but the others professed to have experienced the most delicious sensations of lightness and elasticity after their immersion, and the only qualifying drawback hinted at by them was a certain clamminess left upon the skin by the contact of those bituminous waters.

Weary was our ride through the mountains of Judea, and gallantly did our horses carry us up and down the rocky hill-sides, and over the craggy paths that looked impassable for any living thing but goats, until sunset, when we halted and pitched our tents on an eminence commanding a view of the Dead Sea, and in the vicinity of a lonely mosque, called Nebbi Mousa (the Prophet Moses) held in great veneration by the Moslems. They affirm that Moses is buried there, but of course no Christian participates in a belief which is so uncompromisingly negatived by Bible testimony, (" And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab over against Beth-peor; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre to

this day." Numbers, xxxiv. 6.) After our evening repast, we walked up to the mosque, in the hopes of being admitted to a sight of the tomb. It is under the guardianship of a solitary Derweesh, an Indian Mahometan, who is so faithful to his trust, that neither entreaties nor bribes on our part could prevail with him to allow us entrance into the mosque. The utmost we could obtain of him was permission to peep through the grated windows of the mausoleum, where the Catafalque of Moses is placed, enveloped, like all Turkish tombs, in a gorgeous covering of green silk enriched with gold ornaments. But he appeared to think even that casual glimpse too great a concession to be accorded to Christians, and speedily warned us off the premises, as though desecration lurked in our eyes, and could be communicated by a glance.

This Derweesh is not only a perfect enthusiast in religion, but one of those fanatics whom solitude and a heated imagination have brought to the verge of insanity. In accordance with the Moslem theory, that " prayer is better than sleep," he passed the whole night (much to our annoyance, as our rest was completely broken by his devout exercises,) in singing in a voice of thunder a sort of religious chaunt, the words

of which expressed a declaration of his indifference to worldly advantage or worldly pleasures, and his impatience to exchange this life for the glories of Paradise. You can scarcely imagine the strange effect this wild song—the voice of one crying in the wilderness—produced amidst the stillness of night in that awful solitude. Only at dawn did it cease; but, in those desolate regions, dawn brings with it none of the sights and sounds that elsewhere greet the return of day. The song of the wild bird, the hum of the wild bee replaced not the fervid hymns of the night watcher, and the sun rose upon parched hills where not a blade of grass springs up to gather on its bosom the sparkling tears of morning. No wonder that in such a lifeless wilderness, with no companions but his own fevered thoughts, the devotion of this poor Indian should have over-wrought itself into insanity! His contempt of the world and its vanities has not, however, rendered him insensible to the pleasures of *bachshish;* and although he did not solicit anything from us, his burning eyes flashed keenly as his ready hand clutched our offering.

On our way back to Jerusalem we met a large company of Mahometan pilgrims, men, women, and children, the former riding, the latter packed

away like poultry into *Tackterawans* slung upon the backs of mules, on their way to the Tomb of Moses. By the manner in which the women were veiled, we knew them to be Turkish, and from the appearance of their cavalcade they had come from a much greater distance than Jerusalem. But such is the sanctity of Nebbi Mousa as a place of pilgrimage for Mahometans, that they flock thither from all parts of the Turkish Empire with the same religious enthusiasm which yearly brings so many of the Christians of the East to the banks of the Jordan. This was our only rencontre, and, with the exception of a few herds of goats, we saw no other living thing, either going or returning from the Dead Sea.

Sheikh Hamed was very urgent with me to pay a visit to his tribe in their encampment, a few miles from Jerusalem, and dine with his two wives; but there are circumstances attending Bedouin hospitality which led me to negative his request. Much as my curiosity was on the *qui vive* at the idea of penetrating into the domestic privacy of these primitive races, one ceremony I knew would attend my reception in their tents which it would be impossible for me to evade, and which I felt that I could not screw up my courage to witness. When a stranger

becomes the guest of a Bedouin Sheikh, his coming is celebrated by the chief causing a lamb or a kid to be brought before him with great ceremony, accompanied by the elders of the tribe, and then immolated by his own hand in the stranger's presence. And while the blood of the victim is still reeking on the ground, its flesh is cut up, seethed, and served up as the repast of welcome to the visitor, in the genuine old patriarchal style which characterized the Arabs of Abraham's time, and has been handed down by them in its primitive purity from father to son, to those of the present day. With this sanguinary episode staring me in the face, I dared not accede to Sheikh Hamed's pressing invitation; but our refusal was softened by doubling the *bachshish* we presented to him on reaching Jerusalem, and which he had amply earned by the zeal and alacrity he displayed in our service, and the watchful care with which he was ever at hand to lead my horse over those desperate bits of road we every now and then encountered on our way to and from the Dead Sea.

We found Jerusalem overflowing with strangers. Many of our Nile acquaintances had arrived during our three days' absence, and so scarce had accommodations in the town become, that

some of the new comers were obliged to bivouack in their tents outside of the Jaffa Gate, and live there under the protection of a guard of Bedouins. One would imagine that this amazing influx of strangers from all parts of the world would impart something like bustling gaiety to the appearance of the Holy City, but nothing seems to animate it; and although every convent, Latin, Greek, and Armenian, is full of pilgrims to overflowing, and that almost every house within the gates has its quota of lodgers, and that the square before the Holy Sepulchre is thronged with the buyers and sellers of crosses and rosaries, and the door of the church beset from morning till night with eager applicants for admission, yet even all this does not suffice to infuse into Jerusalem that healthful vitality which animates other places. The temporary excitement merely acts upon it like the galvanic battery upon a dead body, producing a few convulsive starts that for a moment cheat one into a belief of the life they simulate, and then subsiding into the "cold, obstructive apathy" of death. Misery indeed appears to have marked the city of Zion for its own; so wretched a population, I believe, exists nowhere else, and the Jewish part of it especially are the most degraded-looking race, both physically and

morally, I ever yet saw. They steal about the squalid byeways with the timid step of interlopers, and with the suffering air of the inhabitants of a beleaguered city. They all look aged, or prematurely old, and I did not think it possible for any place of the same size to contain so many hideous old women as I have remarked among the Jewesses of Jerusalem. I have been told that there are some wealthy Jews residing here, but it is difficult to believe that such is the case, for the stamp of misery is apparent upon everything belonging to this people; even their synagogue, their chief place of worship in the city which once contained the Temple of Solomon, is characterized by the most ignoble poverty.

Now and then a Consular apparition, preceded by the official Janissaries and their imposing silver-headed staves, crosses one's path, and reminds one that the protection, and the intercourse, and the refinement of Europe are to be found even here; but such apparitions are few and far between, for there is little to tempt the dwellers in Jerusalem to perambulate its wretched streets. I can imagine no banishment more dreadful than a residence here. Since the death of Bishop Alexander and the departure of his family, society has dwindled down to the domestic circle of

Monsieur Jorelle, the French Consul, who is the only married man among the European agents at present here; but a fresh domestic importation is daily expected in the persons of the newly appointed English Consul and his wife, whose advent is looked for with an anxiety proportioned to the social paucity experienced here. Monsieur and Madame Jorelle are kind and amiable people, and do all that lies in their power to promote friendly intercourse. They gave us a general invitation to their house, where whist is played every evening; but there is something so incongruous to me in the idea of a card party in Jerusalem, and I am besides always so thoroughly fatigued with my morning rambles by the time evening approaches, that I have never yet made my appearance at one of the Consular *réunions*. Of all places in the world, Jerusalem appears to me to be the last in which a temporary sojourner would seek for society, or feel the want of it; and I have yet to learn how people can pass the morning beneath the olive-trees of Gethsemane, or upon Calvary, and casting aside with their riding-dress the solemn associations which these localities call forth, close their evening at the whist-table.

*   *   *   *   *

This is the Holy Week, and I ought to have told you that it commenced on Sunday by the distribution of palm-branches (in commemoration of our Saviour's triumphal entry into Jerusalem) tressed in the most ingenious and elegant manner, and surmounted with a cross. One of them was sent to me, and I much regret the impossibility of taking it with me to Europe; but its great length precludes all attempt to pack it up in any of our travelling cases, and it is too fragile to be tied up and carried with the loose bundle of umbrellas and Jordan wands that are consigned to the care of one of our muleteers.

Each day has been marked by a religious ceremony in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, performed by the Latin Fathers of the Terra Santa Convent, and consisting of a high Pontifical Mass (very inferior in pomp and circumstance to similar observances in Italy) followed by a procession round the interior of the church, each person holding a lighted *cierge,* and terminating by a certain number of circuits of the chapel containing the tomb of Christ, accompanied by as many prostrations before its entrance. On one of these occasions I attended, and was scandalized at beholding Turkish sentinels under arms posted at each of the Holy Sites within the church, and

guarding all the avenues; and a company of Turkish soldiers with fixed bayonets closing the procession of Christian priests and pilgrims, and following their footsteps round and round the Saviour's sepulchre. Nothing, however, could be more decent and exemplary than their conduct; not an irreverent look or gesture was to be detected among them, and, had it not been for their martial array, I should have taken them for participators in the religious function rather than infidel keepers of the peace. That the peace should be required to be *so* kept among Christians, upon such an occasion, and in such a spot, was the mortifying reflection that assailed me!

But it was on the night of Good Friday that the great ceremony of the week took place. On that anniversary it is customary for the Latin Fathers to commemorate the Passion and Death of Christ by giving a representation of the Crucifixion, upon the very spot where they believe it to have taken place; and it is of course the aim of every stranger in Jerusalem to be admitted as a spectator, if not a participator, in the rite. The whole ceremonial partakes much of the character of the old "Mysteries," or Sacred Dramas of the middle ages. An effigy of our Saviour nailed to the

Cross, smaller than life, but perfectly well coloured, and distilling blood from the hands, feet, and side, is borne through the Church, at the head of a long procession of friars and pilgrims; and stations are made at the several places sanctified by the Passion, at each of which a sermon is preached in a different language. The whole of the church is understood to be given up to the Latin Catholics for the ceremonial; and neither Greeks nor Armenians have any right to interfere in its celebration. Yet such are the feelings of "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness" entertained for each other by the Greek and Latin monks of Terra Santa, that some unpleasant demonstration, very much out of character with the place and the season selected for such un-christian exhibitions, annually occurs at the celebration of their great solemnities. This year a scene was got up by the Greeks, of so disgraceful a nature that it baffles all description, and sets at defiance every reasonable mode of accounting for such proceedings.

We repaired to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at eight in the evening of Good Friday, and found ourselves in an atmosphere of light and incense; silver lamps innumerable were

burning—silver censers were tossed aloft! The lower part of the building was thronged to repletion with pilgrims and devotees, each furnished with a lighted *cierge*, and forming a procession which completely filled the body of the church. The numerous travellers now in Jerusalem were there too; those among them who are Catholics mingling in the procession. All the Consuls were present in full dress, attended by their Cancellieri, their Janissaries, and everything that could add to their official dignity; and pre-eminent among them was the French Consul, to whom, as the representative of the country which has declared itself to be the protector of the Holy Places and of the Latin Convents of Palestine and Syria, precedence above the others was assigned. Accompanied by his wife and daughter, and followed by the whole suite of the French Consulate, Monsieur Jorelle occupied a place close to the Reverendissime, or Superior of the Latin Convent, who, clad in Pontifical robes, and wearing a golden mitre, represented in a very dignified manner the Catholic Church of the Holy Land. But the Greek Consul contrived to make more bustle than all the rest of the Consular body put together; splendidly dressed in the Albanian

costume, his snowy *fustanella* was seen fluttering in all parts of the church; and the clatter of his weapons, and those of his followers, upon the marble pavement, appeared ominously to sound a warlike alarum, which subsequent events justified the Catholics in asserting had been a pre-concerted signal to the onslaught.

When we reached the Church, the ceremony had already commenced. A sermon in Latin had been preached upon the spot where Jesus was scourged; a second in French at the place where He was crowned with thorns; and a third in German was just terminating at the Chapel called *Impropere,* where He was spat upon and buffetted by the soldiers of Pilate; the effigy of our Saviour borne aloft by a Franciscan brother, having made a station at each of those sites, while the discourses were pronounced. The procession then ascended the staircase leading to Calvary, and a fourth station was made in the Latin Chapel to the right of the place of Crucifixion, on the spot where our Lord was nailed to the Cross; and there, while his effigy was laid upon the pavement, and that the ceremony of nailing it to the Crucifix was enacted, a sermon in Greek was most impressively pronounced.

Up to this time everything had proceeded smoothly; no sounds were heard, save the deep tones of the several preachers, and the hushed whispers of the multitude mingled with the occasional sighs and sobs of some of the pilgrims. The ceremony of nailing to the Cross terminated, the procession, chaunting the *De profundis*, proceeded in the most orderly manner to take its position upon Calvary, where a sermon in Italian was to be pronounced at the moment when the Crucifix should be affixed in the identical aperture in which the Cross of the Divine Sufferer was planted. The Chapel of the Crucifixion belongs to the Greeks, but they have always been constrained to lend it to the Latins for this occasion, which has generally been a source of discord, although of a less formidable nature than in the present instance. The Chapel was, as you may imagine, full to suffocation; everybody was drenched with rose-water from the censers of the priests; the arm-chair of the Reverendissime had been placed exactly facing the spot where the Cross was to be planted; a large body of monks formed a semicircle behind him, and I (by great good luck, as I then imagined) had obtained a place at his left hand, and so near to him as to sup-

port myself against the pressure of the crowd by leaning on the arm of his chair. He was deadly pale, and I observed a tremor in his hands and a quivering of his lips which I then attributed to the fervour of piety, and the emotion incidental to the solemn scene then enacting. For, I assure you, that although I had gone to the ceremony contemning what I supposed would be a mummery little less than sacrilegious in the opinion of Christians of the Protestant faith; and although when there, my judgment revolted against this coarse imaging forth of the Redeemer's agony, yet the ideas it awakened,—the time, the place, the contagion of the emotions I witnessed,—all combined to act so powerfully upon my imagination, that I trembled and wept as I beheld the Cross reach the Chapel of the Crucifixion; and the same sensations of indignant sorrow assailed me that in my childhood I had always experienced when reading the account of our Lord's Passion.

An altar covers the spot where the step of the true Cross rested; and upon each side of it stood, like a sentinel, a Greek priest. This, in itself, was looked upon as an offensive proceeding; but when the Latin fathers approached, and attempted

to remove the Greek altar-cloth, which had no business there on that occasion, the two priests interposed, and insisted upon its remaining where it was. The Latins remonstrated, and persisted in uncovering the altar; but instead of listening to them, aggressive measures were adopted by their opponents. They tore down one of the chandeliers, and breaking a branch from it, began dealing blows right and left. A crowd of Greeks, who had not before appeared, rushed in, armed with bludgeons; the Latin monks defended themselves as well as they could with their enormous *cierges*, which they converted into weapons; but some of them, in anticipation of what occurred, had brought wooden staves concealed beneath their robes; a number of pilgrims rushed into the *mêlée*, and a general and bloody battle ensued!

I shall not attempt to describe the terror that assailed me. The dense crowd in which we were jammed—the shrieks and imprecations of the combatants,—the cries of women fainting and trampled upon,—the knowledge that no mode of egress existed but the two narrow flights of steep steps leading down from Calvary into the church,—and the consciousness that the mass of people who were endeavouring to escape, were pushing us thither, and that we should, if not squeezed to

death against the railings, most likely be thrown down stairs and trodden under foot—all these combined, seemed to leave us so little chance of safety, that I began silently to take leave of myself, giving all up for lost! My friends carefully surrounded me, making a strong barrier with their persons to shield me from the blows that were dealt around; while Mohammed gallantly disputed every inch of ground that we were obliged to yield to the belligerents as they pushed us onwards towards the terrible stairs. An Irish gentleman, whom I had never seen before, but to whom I must eternally feel grateful for his chivalrous conduct to a stranger,—an exceedingly tall and very powerful-looking man—placed himself before me, and assured me that if I would trust myself to him he would carry me on his shoulders safely over the heads of the crowd, down the staircase, while the gentlemen of our party should endeavour to make a temporary stand against the crush of the mob that threatened to precipitate us head-foremost over the banisters.

It was no time for hesitation; we were already at the head of the stairs, and I was about to commit myself blindly to the united care of my champions, when suddenly our retreat was cut off

by a regiment of Turkish soldiers with fixed bayonets rushing up the staircase. To have endeavoured to force our way against them would have been madness; for an instant I believed our last moment had arrived, and that we must perish between the two conflicting masses. I was quite helpless with terror, but happily my companions had all their senses about them; they contrived to drag me behind a pillar and effectually to shelter me there while the troops charged up the staircase, and rushed past us upon Calvary; and while the crowd of combatants were driven backwards into the chapel at the point of the bayonet, we hastened to profit by the temporary clearance of the staircase, and descended into the church.

The tocsin sounded, and in a few minutes Mehemet Pasha, the Turkish Governor of Jerusalem, made his appearance with all his suite, and a strong reinforcement of troops. He took his seat upon the cushions at the entrance of the church where the Turkish porters are always stationed, and there held a court of justice. Order having been restored above stairs by the vigorous interference of the soldiery, the Pasha caused the leaders of the conflicting parties to be brought before him, and listened with great patience to

the statements made on both sides, and with wonderful address and judgment endeavoured to reconcile the stormy elements, but in vain! The Latins maintained that their ceremony must be resumed, for if not it would be making an eternal concession of their rights. The Greeks protested that they would not allow the removal of their altar-cloth, which the Latins declared amounted to annulling their ceremony, as the chapel must be given up to them for that particular function without let or hindrance. The Greeks said they would yield only to force. Mehemet Pasha, who is a man of the world, as well as a man of sense, turned to one of my friends whom he had invited to place himself on the cushions by his side, and, shrugging his shoulders, remarked in French, which he speaks admirably, (having been for many years attached to the Ottoman embassy at Paris,) that such unseemly disputes did more to throw discredit upon the sanctity of the tomb of Christ, and upon the spirit of the Christian religion, than all the writings of all the philosophers in the world. "The Mahometans argue from it that the spot cannot be holy ground," said he; "for that, if it were, God would not permit it to be desecrated by such disgraceful scenes."

Then turning to the disputants, he said that he

must leave the religious question to themselves to be settled hereafter, for that he could not and would not enter into its merits; but that, as a neutral authority, he would interfere. Not only had the *peace* been broken, but about *thirty heads* into the bargain; and that, as he found both parties inaccessible to reason, he would take upon himself to remove the cause of discord. This he did by proceeding forthwith to the chapel upon Calvary, and in the most graceful and dignified manner removing with his own hand the obnoxious altar-covering, to the great delight of the consuls of the Catholic powers, (who took the affair up very warmly,) and of course to the discomfiture of the Greeks, Russians, &c. The Sardinian consul was spokesman for the Catholics throughout, for Monsieur Jorelle had vanished at the commencement of the fray: he had accompanied his fainting wife and daughter home, and only returned to the church in time to witness order being restored by this bold *coup de main* of Mehemet Pasha.

The poor Reverendissime of the Latin convent, who had been thrown out of his arm-chair, trampled under foot, and finally dragged down stairs, now made his re-appearance, trembling in every limb, and his magnificent robes torn and

soiled. The ceremony re-commenced from the part where it had been interrupted, but this time a Turkish regiment under arms surrounded the foot of Calvary! The image of the crucified Saviour was raised upon the identical spot where he is supposed to have suffered, and an Italian sermon was preached. Then a Franciscan friar, taking the crown of thorns from the blood-stained brow of the effigy, slowly and theatrically waved it above his own head, and placed it upon the altar: the nails were drawn forth with pincers from the hands and feet in like manner, kissed by the officiating friar, and deposited by the side of the crown, while the few words with which he accompanied this ceremony were drowned in the sighs and tears of the crowd. The body was then taken down from the cross by two friars personating Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, and by them it was carried down into the church and laid upon the stone of unction, where it was washed, anointed, and rolled up in linen by the president of the Latin convent with the greatest pomp; and a sermon was there preached in Arabic. From thence it was borne by the Reverendissime and other monks to its last station, the Holy Sepulchre; and having been deposited by them in the Tomb of Christ, it was

left there, and the gates were closed upon it. A sermon preached in Spanish at the Holy Sepulchre terminated the ceremony at midnight, and everybody then dispersed quietly to their homes. We had been led to expect that a sermon in English would have been preached by an Irish Capucin, but such was not the case.

Thus ended the commemoration of the Passion upon Calvary! and such were the demonstrations of Christian charity and love, made upon the spot where Christ died, by His followers—by men who have devoted their lives to preaching His Word in the city where He ministered—who have expatriated themselves, that they may watch over and shield from the infidel's touch the rock which was sanctified by His blood, and the tomb made holy by His body! Oh, what an example to be given to the Christian world! and—far worse—what an example to be held up to the Jew and the Moslem, who, in their most fanatical zeal, never dreamed of desecrating the tomb of Christ as His followers have done! I declare to you that I blushed for the name of Christian, and that it was with sentiments of mortification and humiliation that I quitted the scene of such a disgraceful riot, and remembered that the only actors in it who had exhibited good sense, moderation, and decorum, were *the Turks*.

The Governor of Jerusalem departed at the same moment with ourselves: his observations upon what had occurred evinced great tact and good sense; they were those of a citizen of the world, and not of a Turk; but I fear that in his inmost heart he cannot, for more reasons than those above stated, bear much respect to the professors of Christianity. His wife, a Greek Catholic, married to an Englishman, and the mother of Christian children, abjured the faith of her fathers, and embraced Mahometanism, that she might enter his hareem. As yet he has given her no rival, but the marriage has not proved a happy one. The lady chafes beneath the confinement of a Turkish hareem; the husband distrusts the stability of his wife's principles and sentiments, knowing how lightly she laid aside her religion and became a renegade, not from conviction, but for expediency alone; and those who best know them, predict that they will soon dissolve the tie that now unites them.

To-day is trebly celebrated in Jerusalem, being the Easter Sunday of the Latin Catholics, the Palm Sunday of the Greeks, and the Passover of the Jews. Some of the Jewish unleavened bread was brought to me this morning; it is

merely flour and water made into thin cakes like biscuits, and baked very dry. To-morrow (Easter Monday) the Christian pilgrims go to the Jordan in a body of several thousands, escorted by the Pasha of Jerusalem, and what his Excellency terms "cinquante chevaliers," (cavaliers,) or irregular cavalry soldiers, who go in order to protect them from the attacks of the wandering Arab tribes. With great difficulty we have obtained from Mehemet Pasha two of these said *chevaliers* to be our escort as far as Nablous, for which place we depart to-morrow, on our way to Damascus; but he has finally promised that we shall have them, and we know that the word of a Turk is to be relied upon.

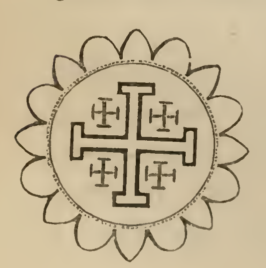
This morning I received my pilgrim's diploma from the Latin convent of Terra Santa, which, together with my pilgrim's staff, shall be hung up in my boudoir, should I ever reach home. A Catholic lady, to whom I shewed the diploma, expressed great surprise that it should have been granted to a Protestant; and at the same time assured me that it would open for me the gates of Paradise! So you see that I am now indisputably a *hadjee;* and to convince you that I am not laying claim to honours which I do not deserve, and to save you the trouble of a journey

to Jerusalem, in order to test the truth of what I assert, (for it is there registered in the Latin convent,) I herewith send you a copy of my *Brevet de Pélerine.*

IN DEI NOMINE AMEN.

Omnibus, et singulus has præsentes litteras inspecturis, lecturis, vel legi audituris fidem, notumque facimus Nos infrascripti Custos Terræ Sanctæ, D$^{am.}$ D$^{am.}$ Isabellam Franciscam Romer ex Anglia in suo itinere Jerusalem pervenisse die 13 Martii 1846 : inde subsequentibus diebus præcipua Sanctuaria, in quibus Mundi Salvator suum populum dilectum, imo et totius humani generis massam damnatum, a miserabili dæmonum potestate misericorditer salvavit; utpote Calvarium, ubi cruci affixus, devicta morte, Cœli januas nobis aperuit; Sepulchrum, ubi Sacrosanctum ejus corpus reconditum triduo ante suam gloriosissimam Resurrectionem quievit, ac tandem ea omnia Sacra Palestinæ Loca gressibus Domini, ac beatissimæ ejus Matris consecrata, a Religiosis nostris, et Peregrinis Visitari solita, visitasse.

In quorum fidem has manu nostra subscriptas, et sigillo officii nostri munitas expediri mandavimus.



Datis Jerusalem ex hoc nostro Venerabili Conventu S. Salvatoris die 12 Aprilis 1846.

De Mandato Reverendiss. in Christo Patris Fr. Joseph a Tellario T. S. Pro Secretarius.

CHAPTER XII.

THE JEWS OF JERUSALEM.—DEPARTURE.—CHRISTIAN PILGRIMS. —TOMBS OF THE KINGS.—BIVOUAC.—EINBROOT.—ALBANIAN SOLDIERS.—NIGHT DEWS.—SAMARIA.—NABLOUS.—JACOB'S WELL.—THE SAMARITANS.—SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH.—SEBASTE.—JENEEN.—SHEIKH ABDERAHMAN.—PLAIN OF ESDRAELON.—MOUNT TABOR.—NAZARETH.—FRANCISCAN CONVENT.—HOLY SITES.—CHAPEL OF THE ANNUNCIATION.—TABLE.—VIEW.—EARTHQUAKE.—MIRACLE.—FRA STANISLAO.—DR. ROBINSON'S WORK.

Nazareth, April 18, 1846.

YOU will naturally have expected, that, in writing to you from Jerusalem, I should have given you some details of the actual state of the Jews, both in a moral and a political point of view; but the fact is, that of that subject—so interesting a one to the evangelical circles of England—I heard less *there* than in my own country. I had no personal communication with the Jews of Jerusalem, and was not acquainted with any of the resident missionaries; all that I could gather of their habits and feelings were broad generalities, and from these I

should infer that the Jews of to-day are, in all *save in their poverty and abasement*, what the Jews of two thousand years ago were. Those dwelling in Jerusalem average about a third of its population, and amount to four thousand. Of these, part are native Israelites, that is to say, descendants of the Spanish Jews who settled there when they were driven from the Peninsula by the bigotted policy of the sovereigns of Castile, and some of them are reputed to be wealthy; the remainder are Jews who flock to Jerusalem from various parts of Europe, (chiefly from Poland and Germany,) in order to die there, and lay their bones in the Valley of Jehosophat, beneath the shadow of the rock upon which the Holy of Holies was built; and these for the most part are steeped to the lips in poverty, and are dependant for support upon the precarious bounty sent to them from Europe by their own people. Their conversion progresses but slowly, if it progresses at all; for, notwithstanding the large sums of money that are annually expended upon the cause in England, and the indefatigable efforts, the patient zeal, and the mild persuasion of the Protestant missionaries sent out to Jerusalem by the Missionary Society, the Jews cling with fidelity to

their antique faith and superstitions, and, adhering to their synagogue and to their expectation of the coming of the Messiah, reject as delusion the belief that is founded upon the Great Sacrifice upon Calvary.

Although no admirer of the Jewish tenets, I have always thought that there was something respectable and touching in this unswerving adherance of a scattered and persecuted people to the religion of their fathers—in this keeping of themselves inviolately apart in spiritual concerns from the nations among whom they have become naturalized, and whose customs they have in every other particular adopted; and although it has brought upon them the stigma of "stiff-necked stubbornness" and obduracy of heart, I have always (even while deploring their blindness) detected in the midst of my disapprobation something like respect for the constancy with which they have clung to their old convictions.

But since I have been at Jerusalem, I will confess to you that I can scarcely wonder at, or blame the Jews for the anti-Christian spirit they manifest in the great question of conversion. The corrupt state of the Church of Christ throughout the East, the disgraceful dissensions that divide its various communities in Jerusalem, the

gross superstitions that deface the practical piety of the different Christian sects of Terra Santa, and the unmitigated hatred and contempt which they all openly profess for each other, are elements to repel rather than to attract the confidence, and sympathy, and veneration upon which religious convictions, and consequently religious conversions, must be based. The individual labours of the few members of the Missionary Society who have been sent into Judea are inefficient to compete with the effects produced by the dissensions and bigotry of the great mass of the Christian community of Jerusalem ; and it cannot be a matter of surprise, that the Jews, who found their opinions of the doctrines of Christ upon the conduct of His followers, should, when told that the religion of Jesus is one of love, of peace, and of goodwill towards all men, contrast such theories with the sanguinary episodes that every now and then desecrate the precincts of the Holy Sepulchre, and turn with coldness from a faith whose preaching and practice are so lamentably at variance.

During the whole of our stay at Jerusalem, we were attended by one of the late Bishop Alexander's very few converts to Christianity, as cicerone, and he was a *Druse*, and not a Jew ! A fact

so conclusive as to the anti-proselytism of the Jews requires no comment. The zeal and piety of the Bishop led to his appointment to the new see; he was besides a converted Jew himself, and for that reason was perhaps better enabled to address himself to the sympathies of the Jews, than one who had always been an alien to them. He was a man, too, of most exemplary character, whose practice went hand in hand with his precepts; and yet, during the several years of his episcopal labours, he was unable to prevail upon the children of Israel to do as he had done!

* * * * *

We quitted Jerusalem on the morning of the 13th; and many a lingering look did I cast behind me, as from the rising ground beyond the Damascus gate I reined in my horse to take a last view of the Holy City—holy beyond all others, not only in the estimation of the Christian and the Jew, but of the Moslem too, from whom it has received the sacred denomination of El Khoddes, (the Holy,) and by whom it is reverenced next to Mecca. It is a place that can neither be approached nor quitted like the other cities of the earth, with the light and worldly sentiments—I should rather say sensations—of eagerness, curiosity, or disappoint-

ment that influence one in visiting an unknown place, and in perhaps finding it less beautiful than one had expected. Eagerness there assumes the character of holy yearning; curiosity is raised into awful anticipation; and if disappointment follows a first sight of the squalid misery, poverty, and degradation exhibited in the interior of the once proud city, it is not the vulgar disappointment caused by the absence of mere physical comfort, it is a sacred sorrow that mourns over the fallen state of a place once peopled by kings and prophets, and chosen by the Almighty as the theatre of the most important event to the immortal destinies of mankind that the world ever witnessed.

As our eyes wandered from hill to hill, engraving upon our memory every undulation of those gray and barren crags, where nothing flourishes but the mournful olive, we beheld the immense caravan of Christian pilgrims issuing forth from the city on its way to the Jordan. Mounted upon dromedaries, camels, horses, mules, and asses, and preceded and followed by a detachment of irregular cavalry, they looked like an army in movement as they wound slowly over the barren hill-sides leading to Jericho. Many of these pilgrims will never return to Jerusalem,

for there are fatal casualties every year caused by the rapid rushing of the Jordan, and the rashness with which the devotees trust themselves to the stream; but, as Paradise is the reward of those who thus perish, neither precaution for the living nor vain regrets for the dead are the consequence of such disasters. Some of our English acquaintances accompanied the caravan; but we had visited the Jordan some days earlier, purposely that we might avoid the crush and bustle of the Easter gathering.*

Our way lay by one of those antique monuments, so fruitful in controversy, which have puzzled, and will continue to puzzle, antiquarians past, present, and to come, as long as a fragment of it remains upon which a doubt or a conjecture may

* We met Mr. and Mrs. T. afterwards at Beyrout, and they told us that they had seen a man carried away by the stream and drowned, without any person making an effort to save him. Mr. T.'s Arab servant was at that moment in the river close to the drowning man, filling some bottles with Jordan water, and upon his master asking him why he had not endeavoured to rescue him, he replied, that had he done so, he should have lost the bottles! On the same day a woman fell from a dromedary, broke her neck, and of course died on the spot; and another woman was seized with the pains of child-birth, and brought forth on the bank of the river; the child was immediately plunged into the water, but whether it survived so early an immersion, my friends never learned.

be fastened. I allude to the excavation on the Damascus road, known as the "Tombs of the Kings," and now tenantless as the royal tombs of Thebes. It consists of a large court open to the skies, cut out of the rock, and preceding several dark sepulchral chambers, which are strewn over with fragments of sarcophagi exquisitely sculptured with representations of fruit, flowers, and foliage. Not one of these sarcophagi remains entire, nor has any inscription been found that could throw a glimpse of light upon the ancient destination of this noble tomb,—whether it was indeed the sepulchre of the Kings of Judah, or the mausoleum of the Roman conquerors of Jerusalem. Part of a beautiful façade on the western side of the court, and which leads into the suite of excavated chambers, would lead one to infer, from the style of architecture it exhibits, that it dates from the period of the Roman occupation of Judea. The embellishments are very florid, and consist, like those of the broken sarcophagi, in fruits and flowers beautifully sculptured in the rock. An old man is in attendance at the tomb, who furnishes lights to explore the inner chambers; but, remembering my misfortune at Thebes and at the Pyramids, I did not penetrate beyond

the first room, and deputed my friends to prowl into, and describe to me, the crypts where the coffins were originally deposited. Unquestionably no remains of antiquity extant in or near Jerusalem can compete in beauty with the Tombs of the Kings; but were they indeed the tombs of Jewish royalty?

And why should they not be so? for nothing else answering to the Sepulchres of the Kings of Judah, of which mention is so often made in the sacred writings, is now to be found in the vicinity of the Holy City; and their actual state fully bears out the denunciations of prophecy, which predicted that the bones of the ungodly race should be brought out of their graves, "to be for dung upon the face of the earth!"

Nothing could be more fatiguing or less interesting than our first day's journey. We halted to dine at a village called Beer (the Michmash of Scripture) where there are some considerable ruins of the time of the Lower Empire, and, better still, a well of good water, near to which our repast was spread. No one who has not travelled in the East can understand the important part which these wells or running streams form in the wanderer's itinerary: everything is regulated by them; the mid-day halt,

the night bivouac, equally depend upon their vicinity. If hunger assails you, and you inquire of your dragoman when dinner will be ready, he will answer, "As soon as we reach the well of ——." If, fatigued to death by a long day's ride, you hint at a wish to dismount and have the tents pitched for the night, you are respectfully informed that you must "take patience until you arrive at such a stream, or such a well." In short, I soon learned to inquire, as evening approached, not "Are we near a town or a village?" but "Are we near a spring of fresh water?" and visions of a camp-bed and of repose from thenceforward have become as inseparably identified in my thoughts with the word *water*, as if I were the veriest amateur of hydropathy in the world. And oh! the luxury of slaking one's thirst in a cup of cold sparkling water fresh drawn from the depths of the earth, after hours of exposure to the glare and sunshine of the barren hills of Judea! No gin palace ever yielded half the convivial delight to its frequenters that these lonely springs do to our muleteers, as, crowding round them, "they pass the bottle" from lip to lip, and never draw breath until it is emptied; and I often long to imitate them whenever we reach a running

stream, and casting myself upon the ground like them, on the brink of it, to plunge my face into the cold element, and lave my burning brow, while I refresh my parched palate.

At about two hours' distance from Beer, we passed by the place where Jacob dreamed that he saw the angels ascending and descending from heaven; and a little further on, the village of Einbroot, placed upon the summit of a hill: beyond it, in a narrow grass-grown pass, where there is a fountain, we encamped for the night. But scarcely had we established ourselves there, when a party of thirty horsemen, armed to the teeth with guns, pistols, yataghans, and spears, galloped into the valley, and most cavalierly marched into the little inclosure occupied by us. The chief planted his spear in the ground with an air of authority that at once convinced us he considered himself anything but an intruder, and that it would be hopeless to contend with him the question of priority of possession. These men belong to the irregular troops in the pay of the Turkish government, which are chiefly composed of Albanians, who are the most lawless ruffians in the world. They are employed for repressing popular outbreaks, and keeping in order refractory villages in the interior of the

country, and you may imagine that such a vicinity was anything but agreeable to us. However, there was no possibility of retreating from it; so we put the best face we could upon the affair, and looked as unconcerned as possible, although we felt that, should those men take it into their heads either to pillage or murder us, we could offer them no available resistance, the male part of our retinue consisting of ten men, while they counted three to one against us! Of these ten, two were the "chevaliers" conceded to us by the Pasha of Jerusalem; and their protection does not consist so much in their physical force, as in a certain moral influence, as they are known to be bearers of an order from the Pasha, which renders them responsible for their charge. They are besides acquainted with all the thieves and marauders among whom one has to pass, and know who may be trusted, and who ought to be avoided.

Just before we closed our tents for the night, the chief of the Albanian party jocularly told Mohammed to keep a good look-out, for that he intended to lighten our luggage for us when we were asleep! The night, however, passed very tranquilly, and we were only momentarily disturbed by hearing the preparations for de-

parture made by our neighbours, who resumed their march long before daylight, without having made good their promise of pillaging us. At dawn we were again aroused, but in a far more objectionable manner. A sensation of deadly damp and chill appeared to have penetrated to the very marrow of our bones, and caused the teeth to chatter in our heads. The atmosphere within my tent felt like an ice-house; upon touching the sides of it I found them to be completely saturated: my clothes, which were suspended against them, were just as wet as though they had been wrung through water; and the clammy sheets and coverlet of my bed clung to me as though I had been undergoing a course of hydropathy, but without producing the genial effects that follow the cold swathings of the water cure. The night dew had fallen so heavily, that our tents and everything in them were soaked through. Never did I make so miserable a toilette, for although dry linen was forthcoming from our portmanteaus, I neither owned a second riding-dress nor a second travelling bonnet, and was forced to don my damp ones, even should fever lurk in their folds. We mounted our horses looking like a set of ague patients in the cold fit; but a cup of hot coffee

and a canter in the sun soon warmed us, and we felt no lasting ill effects from having been thus plentifully "sprinkled with the tears of Aurora."

That day's journey was a long and tedious one. We had been told that it would take us eight hours to reach Nablous, but, as is ever the case in this country, the real distance exceeded the assigned one, so that we were eleven weary hours in the saddle before we arrived at our resting-place. Our way lay through the same description of gray, gloomy hills, peeled of every vestige of cultivation, or even of wild vegetation, with nothing to attract us, nothing to interest, save the knowledge that we were treading the path so often trodden by the Saviour's feet, in his journeyings between Jerusalem and the country of his love, Galilee. As we approached the confines of Samaria, the country became more cheerful and cultivated: husbandmen tilling the ground, yokes of oxen, large corn-fields, succeeded to the sterile sadness of Judea, and imparted a living look to the landscape. Nablous itself, the Sechem of the Old, and the Sychar of the New Testament, is beautifully situated in a valley between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, the Mountain of Blessings and the Mountain of

Curses, where, in pursuance of the commands of Moses, Joshua caused six of the tribes to bless the people, and the other six to utter the curses that should follow their evil doings.* The approach to the town is through a grove of olive trees: on the right hand is the Well of Jacob, where Jesus communed with the woman of Samaria; on the left, the tomb of the patriarch Joseph, now covered over with a Turkish mosque. The olive grove was filled with people apparently in a state of great excitement: groups were eagerly talking to one another, and some of them approaching us, communicated the cause of their disturbance. A daring robbery had been committed in the house of a citizen on the preceding

* "These shall stand upon Mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are come over Jordan: Simeon and Levi, and Judah and Issachar, and Joseph and Benjamin.

"And these shall stand upon Mount Ebal to curse: Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, and Dan, and Naphtali." (Deuteronomy, c. xxvii. v. 12, 13.)

"And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark, and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger as he that was born among them; half of them over against Mount Gerizim, and half of them over against Mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel." (Joshua, c. viii. v. 33.)

day, and the town's people had gathered outside of the town in hopes of seeing the military, who had been sent in pursuit of the thieves, bring them back captives. A group of lepers stood afar, not daring to approach the healthy part of the community. Their faces were white with scales, and they stretched forth their diseased hands towards us, to implore alms.

I dismounted, and walking to the well, sat down upon it; with what feelings, those only who have wandered through this sacred land can understand! No one was there to draw water; and I could not say "Give me to drink," although my soul thirsted to taste of that spring. The hour was too late, and we were too weary to linger there long. Mohammed, who had ridden forward to secure us accommodation for the night, now returned, and we remounted our horses and rode into the town, where we found comfortable rooms in the house of a Greek Christian.

The next morning we visited the Samaritan synagogue, where we saw the remnant of that all but extinct race. About seventy families of them remain in Nablous, preserving inviolate all their traditions, their belief, and their superstitions; and no positive or authentic traces of

any others exist in any part of the known world. In short, since the Assyrian conquest under Shalmenezer, when they were led captives to Babylon, the Samaritans have been a lost nation. Many attempts have been made to identify them with populations discovered in various parts of Asia, and even of America; and some loose ideas of these researches for their lost brethren have reached the Samaritans of Nablous, who boldly asserted to us that there is a large colony of them in Hindostan; and, what appeared to us far more incredible, declared with equal confidence that there was a similar establishment of them in Paris. I cannot help fearing that these innocent and primitive people must have founded the latter conjecture upon some *mauvaise plaisanterie* passed upon them by some travelling fabricator of that species of joke denominated in France "*Coq à l'âne:*" indeed, so ridiculous did the assertion appear to me that I should have fancied I must have misunderstood them, (which might easily have been the case, as my medium of communication with them was a guide, who could only mumble a few words of Italian,) had I not remembered that the Samaritans of Nablous had made the same declaration to that charming writer and acute observer, the American traveller, Stevens.

We asked to see, and were shewn, their old manuscript of the Pentateuch in the Samaritan language. This was originally a faithful copy of the Hebrew Law, a transcript of which was furnished by the Jews to the Samaritans shortly before the fall of Jerusalem, in the year A. D. 70. It is supposed to have agreed with the Septuagint, or Greek translation of the Books of the Law, which was made at Alexandria by seventy learned men, two hundred and forty years before Christ. The Hebrew copy of the Law, sent from Jerusalem for that purpose by the High Priest of Israel to Ptolemy Philadelphus, in return for his enfranchising one hundred thousand Jewish slaves, was written on parchment in letters of gold, and was deemed so sacred that every letter of it was counted. The rabbies are believed to have tampered with the integrity of the text of the original Hebrew Law, as well as with the Septuagint; and the Samaritan Pentateuch and all the copies now extant are supposed to be mutilated: but, as that question is irrelevant to my actual subject, (Nablous and its Samaritan citizens,) I shall not here attempt to enlarge upon it. There are many interesting remains in the town and neighbourhood of Nablous; among them Joseph's tomb, which we did not endeavour to

enter, being told that it is closed against Christian feet. There is also the façade of an old Christian church, converted into a mosque, precisely similar to that of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and our guide very gravely assured us that it was constructed by "lo stesso architetto."

At about an hour's distance from Nablous, on the summit of an insulated hill, which is entirely surrounded by a deep valley, is to be seen the site of Sebaste, the city built by Herod to replace the ancient capital of the kingdom of Israel. A wretched Syrian village has, in its turn, replaced the once luxurious city of Herod, and all that now remains of Sebaste are the broken columns of the Tetrarch's palace, and the prison and tomb of his victim, John the Baptist, covered by what was once a Christian church, but is now a Turkish mosque. Nothing can be more beautiful than the position of these ruins: beyond the valley that encircles the hill on which they stand, are other hills cultivated in terraces to their summits, and the whole face of the country is covered with fruit trees and wild flowers. Assuredly the ten tribes who settled in Samaria had by far the advantage in the partition they made when separating from their brethren of Judea, as it

is impossible that the country around Jerusalem could ever have possessed either the beauty or the fertility that are evident in the country of the Samaritans.

In the afternoon we quitted Nablous. The landscape grew more lively at every step as we advanced, and the view we obtained of the town from the hills was perfectly enchanting; the Mountain of Blessings, clothed in verdure and trees to its very summit on one side; the Mountain of Curses, bare and parched as though it had been scathed by lightning, on the other. Jeneen was our resting-place on that night, a little ruinous-looking town, prettily situated on the frontier dividing Samaria from Galilee, but so totally destitute of resource, that we could not obtain in the whole place empty rooms where we might put up our beds; so we were obliged to pitch our tents in a grove of fig trees outside of the town.

Jeneen, the Jezreel of Scripture, where the kings of Israel had a palace, and where Jezebel perished so awfully, enjoys the unenviable reputation of being the most lawless place in all Syria. Even the little boys do not venture to go out without being armed: a solitary or unarmed traveller is sure to be

robbed *even to his clothes;* and knowing this, none of our attendants attempted to enter the town singly.

We, however, were not to be deterred from exploring the wretched place, and after tea we walked into the town without taking any of our servants with us. We were accosted by a very remarkable-looking man, the brother of the Sheikh of Jeneen, who volunteered to escort us about the place, and who appeared to be just the sort of person that it would not have been safe to have offended by a refusal. He was a fine ferocious-looking creature, tall and gaunt, with eyes like a wild cat, that darkened and flashed when he spoke; and as he strode before us with the air of a prince, one wave of his hand and one scowl of his terrible brow sufficed to make the villanous-looking population, who were pressing around us, give way and leave the causeway to ourselves. He was dressed, too, with some elegance for a Bedouin Arab, in a jacket of crimson cloth, large white petticoat trowsers, red Morocco boots, and a red and yellow *keffieh* bound round his head with a rope, the ends shading his dark thin face. I thought, as we followed him through the miserable bazaars, and beheld him kicking the people right and left out

of our way, like so many puppy dogs, that I would not for the world meet that man in the desert; and what we afterwards heard justified the opinion I had formed of him.

Sheikh Abderahman was the son of the late, and is the brother of the present, Sheikh el Belled of Jeneen, and his family have for time immemorial been Sheikhs of the town. When the Egyptians displaced the Turkish government in Syria, and ruled paramount throughout the country, all the local authorities who had shewn themselves inimical to the Egyptian occupation were deprived of office, and replaced by the adherents of Mohammed Ali. Among the rest, the father of Sheikh Abderahman was sent by Ibrahim Pasha to the right-about-left, and superseded by a Sheikh less obnoxious than himself to the policy of the Pasha of Egypt. When, however, the cabinets of Europe decreed that Syria should be restored to the Sultan, the creatures of Mohammed Ali were in their turn dismissed, and the old Turkish nominations reinstated. The former Sheikh of Jeneen had died in exile, and his eldest son was therefore named to the office. The whole family returned to Jeneen, vowing vengeance against the kith and kin of him who had for a time usurped

their place; but these latter took good care to give them no opportunity of fulfilling their threats, and left the district before the return of the legitimate Sheikh.

It so happened, that, just two days before we reached Jeneen, Sheikh Abderahman, who was returning home from some excursion he had been making, came up with a solitary horseman upon the skirts of the desert. He looked at him, and recognized the man that had succeeded his father. Both were armed and both alone; Sheikh Abderahman fell upon the object of his hatred with the fury of a tiger: the struggle was short, but terrible and decisive, for, in two minutes after they met, the lifeless body of the luckless ex-Sheikh was rolling on the sand, and his head, tied up in *keffieh*, dangling from Abderahman's saddle-bow! The horrid trophy was brought in triumph by him to Jeneen; and the fact of his walking about the town the next day when we met him, an object of equal respect and terror, will enable you to form some idea of the standard by which violence is measured and judged in that lawless place. In fact the murderous act of Sheikh Abderahman is looked upon as a most heroic deed, and he is considered in the light of a model of filial piety,

for having washed out the disgrace of his father in the blood of his rival.

The tiger, however, has a soft spot in him. There is in Jeneen a beautiful mosque standing in a grove of the finest orange-trees I ever saw, now thickly covered with blossoms, and inclosed within high walls and a gateway, which our terrible conductor courteously gave us to understand could not be opened for *us;* but upon seeing me cast my eyes admiringly upwards to the fragrant boughs that overtopped the forbidden inclosure, he mounted the wall with the agility of a cat, and unsparingly broke off all the branches within his reach for me. And when, on our return to the tents, whither he accompanied us, he saw me strip off the blossoms to put them up in paper, he busied himself in twisting up the nicest little paper bags I ever saw, and packed up all the flowers in them as neatly as any French perfumer could have done.

Sheikh Abderahman seated himself on the ground opposite to the entrance of our tents, and remained there until dark, when he announced to Mohammed his intention of keeping watch himself over us during the night. This stretch of courtesy, however, we would not

permit: we allowed him to provide a guard of his own people for us, and after having refreshed him with pipes and coffee, insisted upon his returning to his own house for the night. At five o'clock the following morning he was at the door of my tent, with a large handkerchief full of something tied up in his hand, patiently waiting until the entrance should be unclosed. I declare to you, when I heard this, I trembled lest he should have cut off some unruly head during the night, and brought it to lay as a trophy at the stranger's feet! I was happily relieved, however, when he was admitted, and that, unknotting his handkerchief, he shook the contents of it into my lap; for out rolled — not an Arab's bloody head — but a bushel of delicious orange-blossoms!

On quitting Jeneen we entered upon the magnificent plain of Esdraelon,—more beautiful, if possible, more rich in the loveliest wild flowers, than that of Sharon. At any time, or in any country, so glorious a tract of land would have appeared delightful in our eyes, from its unrivalled fertility; but how surpassingly so did it show after the sterile gloom of Judea, and four days of uninterrupted riding up and down hill, where every step our horses took upon

the rocky way seemed to be at the peril of our lives. As far as the eye could reach, a carpet of gorgeous blossoms mingled with luxuriant verdure stretched around. Mount Tabor, the scene of our Saviour's Transfiguration, stood boldly before us, isolated from the other hills that bound the landscape, beautiful in form, clothed in wood and verdure to the summit, and presenting the most striking object in the scene. Afar off, towering above the distant chain of Lebanon, we could descry "the Hill of Hermon," or, as it is called in this country, Gebel Sheikh, (the Sheikh of the mountains;) its "dew," to which the royal Psalmist compared the love of brothers dwelling together in amity, congealed into snow that glittered in the sun, and cut brilliantly against the azure sky.

After riding four hours across the plain of Esdraelon, and wondering that in such a splendid tract of land there should be neither villages nor detached habitations, we came to the hills among which is situated Nazareth, the country of Joseph and Mary, the place where almost the whole life of Jesus was passed. The little town is so placed that a distant view of it cannot be obtained; but, after scrambling

along a difficult road for three-quarters of an hour, we came suddenly upon the valley on the western side of which it is situated. Peaceful, and primitive, and unworldly it looks, resting on the lower slope of the circular chain of gray barren hills that convert into a sort of basin the green vale of Nazareth spreading at its feet: an air of sanctity appears to pervade the whole place, as though its pure and holy traditions had preserved it inviolate from all mundane associations. We gazed with reverence and love upon the sequestered nook where the youth of Mary had been passed, where the Divine Mystery which made God man had been accomplished, and near to which the first miracles of Christ had been performed. We knew that the localities over which our eyes wandered had been His familiar haunts from the days of His boyhood to those of His sinless maturity; and again we felt, as upon the Mount of Olives, that we trod upon holy ground, concerning which no error, no fraud, could exist!

There is a Latin convent of Franciscans at Nazareth, where travellers are hospitably received; and the good fathers have fitted up a house detached from the convent, in which women can be accommodated, the laws of their

order forbidding the admission of our sex within their holy establishment. This detached house is arranged not only with great comfort, but actually with an elegance which the celebrated convent of Mount Carmel does not exhibit. The Italian taste of the monks has decorated the walls with arabesques in *fresco,* such as are common in the country-houses of Italy, and the chintz hangings and sofas, as well as the bedding, are all of the nicest description. Such an "oasis in the desert" as this, is indeed inestimable, after five days' travelling without any other accommodation than that which tents can afford, with the fear of Bedouins from without, and the certainty of the monstrous insects that the soil of Syria produces crawling about within, perpetually before our eyes; (and I have no hesitation in owning, that, of the two, the latter appeared to me by far the most terrible visitation!) but putting even the physical comforts of the place out of the question, the cordial and hearty welcome given by the good Franciscans would in itself alone suffice to render four bare walls attractive. Three days is the period that travellers are allowed to sojourn as the convent guests, and most warmly have the fathers pressed us to complete the given time here; but we have only availed ourselves of the

privilege for two days — we arrived yesterday before dinner, and we shall depart to-morrow on our way to Damascus.

Every spot that the eye rests on here carries with it an interest which, although of a less awful, less painful character than that experienced at Jerusalem, is in no degree inferior to it, and is besides more concentrated. The town is very small, and from its situation never could have been larger, being in the fork formed by two hills which present an acute angle; so that every spot of ground must have inevitably been trodden by the feet of Him who for thirty years dwelt within its precincts. As to the holy sites which are under the protection of the Franciscan fathers, I will confess to you that they affected me less than the unsophisticated green valley and the breezy hill-sides of Nazareth: they are so mixed up with the monkish legends, and so gaudily decked out with modern ornamental architecture, and with all the upholstery embellishments of silks and fringes, with which piety has deemed it necessary to disguise the localities connected with the Christian narrative, that their identity appears (to me at least) to be destroyed by such accessories. The eloquent author of that delightful volume, "Eothen,"—and

in eloquence and imaginativeness he is unrivalled,—has given a charming account of the sort of beatific vision that assailed him in the sanctuary of Nazareth, where a more than Catholic adoration of the blessed and beautiful Mary, springing out of a long fast and a long ride, caused him to bend the knee and kiss with fervour the ground upon which the maiden knelt when the Angel announced to her the high destinies for which she had been selected. We, too, were fasting, and had ridden far, when we visited the sanctuary, and we would fain have given ourselves up to the same ecstatic reverie; but I must own the truth, nothing of the sort "rapt us from the earth;" and this was owing, perhaps, to some remarks of the reverend friar who acted as our cicerone, and who, in his zeal to prove too much, raised doubts in our minds, at a moment when nothing but most blessed convictions ought to have prevailed.

The sanctuary or chapel of the Annunciation is under the great altar of the Latin church attached to the convent, (which ranks in importance next to that of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem,) and consists of several small grottoes or chambers, said to have composed the dwelling of Joseph and Mary. The window is shewn by

which the Angel Gabriel entered, and a column placed there by the Empress Helena (the lower part of it has been broken away, but the upper fragment adheres *miraculously* to the roof,) marks the spot where Mary stood when she heard the angelic salutation. The locality is certainly explained in a very plausible and natural manner, and there is no conflicting argument against it, as applies to the holy sites in the church at Jerusalem; but when the Franciscan who describes it, and who is a very intelligent man, in the next moment, and with the same air of conviction, points out the place from whence the house of the Virgin was miraculously divided from the part that still remains there, lifted from its foundations, and transported through the air by angels one fine night to Loretto in Italy, a feeling of distrust irresistibly invades the mind as to the general authenticity of what has previously been advanced, and one is painfully puzzled what to believe and what to reject, or where to draw a line of demarcation between the possible and the impossible. Adjacent to the Chapel of the Annunciation are other dark chambers, or grottoes, shewn as the dwelling-place of Elizabeth and Zacharias, the father and mother of John the Baptist, and the cousins of

the Virgin Mary. One unaccountable singularity strikes one in visiting these places: from the appearance of the localities here, as well as the others we have seen in the Holy Land and in Egypt, connected with the Christian narrative, it is to be inferred that the most important events in the lives of the holy family took place in grottoes or subterranean chambers, and that the Mother of God habitually dwelt under ground! The place of the Nativity at Bethlehem, — the residence of Joseph and Mary at Old Cairo, during their concealment in Egypt,—the Virgin's dwelling at Nazareth,—all are below the surface of the earth, and, from their situation, must have been excluded from the light of the sun!

The Franciscan fathers took us to see the synagogue where Jesus taught and ministered, and also the workshop of Joseph the carpenter. But the last "*luogo santo*" exhibited by them to us affected me more than any other of the places at Nazareth so denominated, for it is in its original and natural state, and has merely been covered in by a sort of house that was built over it for its protection; and there is an air of suitableness about it which irresistibly carries conviction to the mind. It is represented

as the table upon which our Saviour, both before his Crucifixion and after his Resurrection, ate with his disciples, and is neither more nor less than a large tabular portion of the rock upon which the town is built. The stone itself is uninjured; and, what is more essential, it has been left just as it rises from the soil, perfectly unadorned, and looks exactly like the place which would have been selected by a set of wandering fishermen to spread out the *impromptu* repast that was asked of them by their unlooked for guest. Be that as it may, what I had not felt in the presence of St. Helena's recording column, I felt here; and I could not resist the impulse which brought me on my knees by the side of the prostrate monks, and caused me to press my forehead reverently against the rude stone.

This morning we ascended the mountain behind the town, and obtained from thence an enchanting view, comprising many of the most remarkable sites in this remarkable land. To the west, the Mediterranean is distinctly to be seen, with St. Jean d'Acre, Caiffa, and Mount Carmel upon its shores. To the east and south, the plain of Esdraelon, with the beautiful cone-like Mount Tabor standing isolated in it; and far off, the mountains that lie beyond Jordan

and the Sea of Galilee. To the north, the magnificent range of Lebanon, its summits white with eternal snows. Nain is also to be perceived, the place consecrated by the raising of the widow's son—the second miracle of our Lord; and far east of the plain of Esdraelon lie the mountains of Gilboa and Endor, the sites of the wars of Saul with the Philistines, the place where he and his sons fell upon their swords to save themselves from the disgrace of falling into the hands of their enemy.

Nazareth suffered considerably from the earthquake of 1835, although the visitation was light compared with what befel its neighbour, Tiberias. The Franciscan who was our cicerone to the summit of the hill mentioned two circumstances of an interesting nature connected with that calamity; but the one in which he evidently took the greatest pride and interest is, I fear, to be cautiously received. At the moment when the shock of the earthquake was felt, mass was being celebrated in the Church of the Annunciation; every body rushed out into the open air, the priest abandoned the Host, which he was in the very act of elevating; many of the attendants fell victims to the catastrophe. On the return of the survivors, they found the Host standing on

its edge, unsupported upon the altar, exactly in the position in which it had been cast from him by the officiating monk. I know that I should have abstained from asking any questions upon such a subject and from such an interlocutor, that conveyed with them an attempt to account by natural means for this circumstance; but I was stupid enough to do so, and my investigations were cut short by a shrug of the shoulders, and an unanswerable conclusion to the argument, "*Questo è miracolo!*"

The other circumstance involves no miracle, but it is interesting as being highly characteristic of that imperturbable fatalism which is the great feature of the Mahometan faith. The Franciscan assured us, that during the calamity the minaret of the Turkish mosque yielded to the influence of the earthquake, and rocked backwards and forwards like the elastic boughs of a tree swayed by the wind; yet in that critical moment, when awful expectation looked to its toppling down, the muezzin came out upon the upper gallery of it, and summoned the faithful to prayer!

A considerable portion of the population of Nazareth are Christians, and the respectful affection evinced by them for the Franciscan monks speaks volumes in favour of these latter. When-

ever they appear in the streets with us, men, women, and children run to kiss their hands, and the good fathers seem to have something kind and encouraging to say to all. There is a school in the convent for the instruction of Christian children, which is under the superintendence of Fra Stanislao, the brother to whom is deputed the reception of travellers; but he sighed heavily and with an expression of unutterable weariness, as he described to me the ungrateful task he found the tutoring of these wild Syrian children to be. Poor fellow! he has only been here fifteen months, and his time of probation in Terra Santa is twelve years! "Ma passa il tempo!" he exclaimed, with the air of a martyr, as he told me this; "Forse rivedrò la mia patria!" The only circumstance that appeared to rouse him into animation was the account we gave him of the fray in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on Good Friday. His face flushed, his veins swelled, his hands involuntarily clenched, he muttered between his teeth "Ahi Birbanti!" All the indications of a fiery temper for a moment became apparent in the bearing of the monk; but they were quickly repressed, and he resumed his characteristic air of resignation and mortification. He listened, however, with evident interest

to our recital; and, as we are the first travellers who have reached this place from Jerusalem since that disgraceful affair, we have been regularly appealed to by all the brotherhood to describe the scene.

Last evening two American gentlemen arrived here, who appear to be deeply read in Biblical lore, and quaintly enough told me they were "*spying out the Holy Land!*" under the guidance of their countryman, Dr. Robinson's learned work. I have not read it; and to my shame be it spoken, I knew not that such a book existed until the day before my departure from Jerusalem, when Mr. M. K., who had just arrived, lent it to me. I could only dip into it here and there, but what I saw filled me with regret that I could not see more,—in short, that I had not had such a travelling companion with me to direct my inquiries, satisfy my doubts, or give me solid reasons for doubting still. Chateaubriand's "Itinerary from Paris to Jerusalem" is a beautiful sacred poem, wherein the ardent piety, the pilgrim faith of the author, leads him to accept as genuine all the localities that the spirit of Catholicism has pointed out as connected with the life and death of Christ Lamartine's "Voyage en Orient" is a poem too, in which a love of holy

things is evident, but mixed up with tastes more profane, and the pilgrim and the jockey are curiously blended in the pages of his highly-coloured work. But Dr. Robinson's book is a fine, healthy, dispassionate piece of prose,—a manly and perspicuous view of a debateable subject, where you are not entrapped by the seductions of language or the charm of imagination to take the author's view of his argument, but where you are struck by the candour, the reasoning powers, the deep research, and the admirable Christian spirit with which he treats the question, and are led to dive into the argument as he has done, to weigh all its *pros* and *cons*, and to endeavour to throw upon them the noon-day light of dispassionate investigation, instead of the *clear obscure* of poetical reveries.

Adieu!

CHAPTER XIII.

CARNE GALIL.—TIBERIAS.—SEA OF GALILEE.—FLEAS.—SHORES OF THE LAKE.—INSECTS.—ROUTE.—AN INCIDENT.—WOLVES.—THE HAOURAN.—CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS.—A FALL.—PERILS OF EASTERN TRAVEL.—APPROACH TO DAMASCUS.—SUBURB.—CEMETERY.—ARRIVAL.—HOTEL DE PALMYRE.—DAMASCUS.—POPULATION.—SHOPPING.—BARGAINS.—LADIES OF DAMASCUS.—ESTHER.—AUSTRIAN CONSULESSA.—ORIENTAL WOMEN.—HOUSES OF DAMASCUS.—PROTESTANT MISSION.—COFFEE-HOUSES.—ROMAN REMAINS.—KHAN OF ASSAAD PASHA.—EGYPTIAN DOMINATION.—SAFETTY PASHA.—ENGLISH CONSUL.—CONSULAR APPOINMENTS.—POLICY.—DEPARTURE.

Damascus, April 28, 1846.

We departed for Tiberias on the 19th, under the escort of a Bedouin, and with an addition to our cavalcade, one of our saddle mares having foaled at Nazareth. The pretty little new-born creature was made to trot after its mother in the commencement of that day's journey, but as it would inevitably have perished of fatigue had such a course been pursued, I insisted upon a more humane arrangement being made for it; and one of our Druse muleteers was accordingly mounted on a donkey, and carried the foal in his lap.

Our way lay by the village of Carne Galil (Cana of Galilee), but we did not stop there, although in a Greek church, built over the house where Christ performed his first miracle, the monks show the identical jars in which the water was changed into wine! but we rode slowly on, and lingered with indescribable interest amidst scenes, every feature of which is identified with some passage in the life of our Saviour. Here, one is called upon to remark the field where his disciples plucked the ears of corn on the Sabbath day; there, the eminence is pointed out from whence He pronounced the Sermon on the Mount—that simple and sublime discourse which so beautifully comprises the whole spirit of the Christian religion; further on is the spot where He miraculously fed the multitude with five loaves and two fishes; and beyond lies the "Country of the Disciples,"—the country of Christ's predilection—the Sea of Galilee and its shores, from whence came His first and faithful followers.

The absorbing interest of the scene rendered me almost insensible to the fatigues of the hilly road and the intense heat of a Syrian noon; but, by the time we reached Tiberias, I was nearly done up; and just as I began to feel the

absolute necessity of a halt, the wretched appearance of the place filled me with apprehension, for it seemed to forbid the hope of obtaining any available accommodation within its walls. Nothing that I have yet seen, where human habitations remain, can compare with Tiberias in desolation! It looks more ruinous that Pompeii; the earthquake of 1835 left scarcely a house standing in the city, and the present habitations are miserable hovels raised upon the ruins. The Pasha's palace, which must have been a fine edifice, is rent asunder, as are the town walls in several places; the gates and guard-house lie prostrate in fragments. The shock lasted five minutes, and eight hundred persons fell victims to it.

After riding with sinking hearts through this scene of destruction, we were agreeably surprised to find spacious and cleanly accommodation in the house of an European Jew, a Gallician Pole of the name of Weissman, who has been established at Tiberias for many years. Before the earthquake he traded in pearls from Bassora, which he sent into Germany; but he was ruined by that awful visitation, and has since eked out a precarious livelihood by keeping a sort of hotel for travellers. The poor fellow told us that he saw his whole family buried by his

side under the ruins of his house. When they were extricated, his wife and two eldest children were corpses; the youngest, an infant of a year old, escaped without injury save to its eyes, which have never yet recovered the mischief inflicted by the dust and rubbish; his own leg and thigh were crushed to atoms, and he will go limping to the grave in consequence. When he recovered, he consoled himself after the fashion of his people, by marrying his wife's younger sister, a very pretty Jewess from Tripoli. We saw her assisting in the household affairs, with her eyes and face painted like Jezebel, and apparently carrying all the riches of the family upon her person, which displayed a profusion of the gold and silver ornaments, and the elegant and expensive costume, peculiar to the Levantine Jewesses.

Tiberias, or, as it is called in this country, Tabareeah, one of the holy cities of the Jews, is beautifully situated on the margin of the Sea of Galilee, near its southern extremity, the continuation of the mountains of Moab forming the opposite outline. The large sheet of water, which is indiscriminately known by the names of the Lake of Genesareth, the Lake of Tiberias, and the Sea of Galilee, is about twelve miles long, and half

as broad: its shores, where once flourished Capernaum, Bethsaida, Chorazin, and the then proud creation of Herod—Tiberias—are now desolate. The latter place is all that remains, and its equal in misery can scarcely be found, even in the East, so redolent of past glory and present degradation. Still, wretched as it is, Tiberias is full of Jews from Europe, who have flocked there to die—people for the most part so poor, that they are chiefly maintained by the charitable contributions sent to them by the wealthy Israelites of Europe. They are principally natives of Germany, Poland, and Russia; and it was curious to hear the various tongues spoken in that miserable little place, and to observe the different costumes flitting about among the ruins—the fur caps of the Muscovites, the black kalpacs of the Poles, and the round hats of the Germans, (hats so ignoble, that they looked as if they had come direct from Monmouth Street!) mingling with the turbans and tarbooshs of the Asiatic Jews. And yet the same peculiarity of physiognomy characterized all, whether from the East or from the West, and seemed to proclaim one great family gathered together. They have a college and two synagogues at Tiberias, and European as well as Asiatic rabbies; and, after Jerusalem,

Tiberias contains more Jews than any other part of Syria, patiently awaiting, amidst poverty and misery, the restoration of the temporal glories of their race.

Whatever questions may be raised as to the identity of many of the localities in the Holy Land with the events attributed to them; however strongly it may be advanced, that war and earthquake have swept from the face of the earth all traces of the towns and cities where our Saviour dwelt, and ministered, and died; however plausibly it may be assumed, that, although these places were subsequently restored, they might have been rebuilt upon other sites than the original ones—the sturdiest caviller, the closest investigator, has not ventured to cast the shadow of a doubt upon the genuineness of the Sea of Galilee. There controversy subsides into silence; or, if it utters a word, it is to proclaim its adhesion to the fact, that those hallowed waters at least have undergone no change! Such as they are *now*, such were they more than eighteen centuries ago, when Christ walked upon the waves as upon dry land—when His presence stilled the raging of the tempest—when He preached the blessed tidings of salvation to sinful humanity upon its shores, and gathered together

from thence the humble followers to whom he bequeathed the glorious privilege of scattering the seeds of Christianity throughout the world, and watering them with their blood. You may imagine therefore our impatience to obtain a view of the lake; but, as Weissman's habitation does not command one, (at least, from the windows of the room occupied by us we could see nothing,) we hurried out after dinner, weary as we were, to profit by the last moments of daylight in satisfying our curiosity.

At about a mile from the town there is a hot mineral spring, over which Ibrahim Pasha caused baths to be constructed for the public use, together with a small private one for himself, with a kiosk adjoining. Thither we repaired. The whole establishment has been allowed to fall almost to ruins, but from the windows of the forsaken kiosk we could look out upon the Sea of Galilee, and, undisturbed by sights or sounds such as distract the mind in the midst of the squalor of Tiberias, contemplate the hallowed scene at our ease. Lonely and lovely it looked, as the deepening shades of evening fell around: there were no signs of life either along its shores or upon its waters; the vast liquid mirror was unbroken by skiff or sail, undimpled even by

the wing of the wild bird returning to its nest! In this absence of all living objects to attract or divide the attention, imagination went busily to work, and pictured forth the scene of the tempest-tossed bark—the waves filling it—the terrified disciples clinging to each other—the Holy One, who had slept tranquilly upon His pillow through the raging of the wind, awakened by their cries, and the furious elements suddenly becoming calm under His mild rebuke of "Peace, be still!"

We were roused from our visionary contemplations by the entrance of some of our Arab attendants, who had been indulging in the luxury of a hot bath in the crazy establishment, and who now came to advise us against the peril of remaining out later in so unsafe a locality. So we retraced our steps to Tiberias; but, powers of patience! what a night awaited us there! I must do Weissman the justice to say, that he warned us against the fate that menaced us,—that he did what he could to mitigate that which could not be averted,—that he recommended us to sleep in our own beds, and to have them placed in the centre of the rooms so as to avoid all contact with the walls,—that he spoke in deprecating terms of "*the flea-season*" (just as though it had been the white-bait

season, or the grouse season!) *being at its height*, and the infliction being an inevitable one, quite distinct from uncleanliness! Alas! would that he had spoken till to-morrow, and that I had passed the night in listening to him instead of going to bed! What availed it that we had our own bedding brought in, and placed like catafalques in the middle of each room, since all the fleas in Palestine had scented our coming, and were whetting their fangs in anticipation of the Christian blood that was to be drawn by them? I spent the greater part of the night walking about the room like one afflicted with St. Vitus's dance; and I thought, in the midst of my misery, that if Dante had ever passed the night at Tiberias *in the height of the flea-season*, he would surely have added that torment to the awful list of punishments devised by him for the dwellers in Purgatory!

The next morning we resumed our way to Damascus by the western side of the lake, where the miracles of our Lord and his conferences with his disciples took place. The path along which we rode looked like a shrubbery, and was all in a flush with a profusion of rose laurels in full bloom; and to the left, in the precipitous sides of the hills that border the Sea of Galilee,

are excavated tombs, which we fancied might be those from which the two men possessed of devils came forth and called upon Jesus, and he caused the devils to go into a herd of swine, "and they rushed down a steep place into the sea and perished in the waters." At all events, the locality perfectly answered to the Gospel account of it.

Our noon-day halt was at Gib Yussuf, (Joseph's Well,) where there is a khan surrounding the pit into which Joseph's brethren cast him when they took counsel among themselves to slay him, and from which they drew him up to sell him to the merchants travelling from Gilead to Egypt. The place is equally reverenced by the Moslems and the Christian Syrians, and, as excellent water is to be obtained there, it is a favourite resting-place for travellers. Further on we came upon the caravan road from Jerusalem to Damascus, and pitched our tents for the night at a place called Jacob's Bridge, on the banks of the Jordan (which here flows out of a smaller lake, and forms a paltry stream until it runs into the Sea of Galilee). But "it was written" that our nights in Palestine should not be nights of repose, and that all sorts of creeping things should frighten sleep from our pillows. I could have fancied my tent to have been the scene of the "Butter-

fly's Ball" or the "Grasshopper's Feast," such a legion of monstrous insects had rendezvous'd there. I did not think that any circumstance in life could have made me regret the lively denizens of Weissman's house; but I declare to you, when I saw the great black spiders at Jacob's Bridge making themselves so perfectly at home in my tent, the ecstacy of my terror made me wish myself back among the fleas at Tiberias!

At daylight we were in the saddle again, I, for one, thankful to be anywhere but where we had passed the night, and yet so weary and exhausted that I could scarcely sit upon my horse. Mohammed, whose expedients and resources appear to be inexhaustible, contrived a sort of divan for me, of cushions and carpets, upon one of the baggage mules; and I found this mode of conveyance so preferable to a side-saddle in the up and down roads of Syria, that I immediately decided upon performing the rest of the journey to Damascus as *baggage No. 1*!

Our route lay across the most splendid plain, or rather uplands, I ever saw, surpassing in picturesque effect either Sharon or Esdraelon,—so beautifully sprinkled with magnificent trees that we could have fancied ourselves in one of the noble parks of England, and so thickly carpetted with

verdure and wild flowers, that as our horses trod among them the air was embalmed with the perfume of crushed blossoms. Yet in this lovely wilderness not a single habitation was to be seen, and as we advanced the solitude increased; all traces of human existence became lost; nothing indicating the vicinity of man, not a goat, not a sheep, was to be perceived; no evidences even of animal life, save enormous flights of pelicans scudding like clouds across the serene blue of the heavens.

Thus we proceeded until four in the afternoon, convinced that we were slowly making our way towards our destination, when we saw Mohammed (who had separated from us and ridden on in advance for some time) come gallopping back, evidently in the greatest agitation. He rode up to the chief of our Druse muleteers, and addressed him in language which, I believe, amounted to desiring him to prepare for his last moments—at least I judge so from the pantomime that followed, for the poor fellow threw himself upon his knees, while Mohammed unslung the gun from his own shoulders and levelled it at him. Notwithstanding these startling preliminaries no murder ensued: our dragoman dismounted, and seizing hold of the Druse by the beard, (the greatest insult that can be offered

to an Oriental,) commuted his punishment into a sound beating. We were completely mystified by such unusual proceedings; but at last, when Mohammed's ire had obtained some relief through the medium of the *courbash* so unsparingly laid by him upon the Druse's shoulders, he was able to tell us that the muleteer had brought us completely out of our way—in short, that the road to Damascus lay north-east of Jacob's Bridge, whereas ever since morning we had been journeying south-east! Imagine what an angle such a digression must have made! It appears that the obstinate fellow overruled various misgivings expressed by Mohammed during the day, (which, however, he never made known to us,) but at last some striking land-mark in his memory caused him to separate from us and go and reconnoitre the ground himself. *Then* he discovered that we were all astray, and he came back and charged the delinquent in such a way as to cause the latter to break down and confess that he did not know where we were!

Our position was anything but agreeable, but no time was to be lost in endeavouring to remedy it. A council of war was held, and we decided that the only course we ought to pursue would be to strike off to the northward with as little

delay as possible, and to regain the track from which we had so widely diverged. We had nothing to guide us but the setting sun, and we rode briskly on in the hope of finding water (that indispensable adjunct to a night bivouac) before darkness should overtake us. We were so fortunate as to reach a stream just as the sun had sunk beneath the horizon; and with joy we perceived near it the traces of a fire having recently been made there. It was evident that travellers had lately passed by; we felt that we were not quite in a deserted country: however, the only living things we descried were a couple of wolves, which we disturbed in their evening prowl; they bounded off beyond gunshot of us, and having attained an eminence at some distance, turned round to examine us at their leisure, and then disappeared, and we saw no more of them.

We pitched our tents on the banks of the stream, and sent off two of our men in quest of human habitations. In about an hour and a half they returned accompanied by two Bedouins belonging to a tribe encamped not far off, who brought us some milk in a bladder, and remained to guard us during the night. From these men we learned the extent of the error into which we had been led by our Druse muleteer.

We were actually in the Haouran,—that endless plain which stretches off to the far Euphrates, and in which are situated the wonderful Roman remains of Jerash, as well as the far more antique remains of the Ammonites, that wealthy and idolatrous race whose perpetual warfare with the chosen people of God drew down upon them the prophetic denunciation, which has been fulfilled to the very letter: "I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couching-place for flocks."* The whole country is looked upon as quite impassable for travellers, except under the protection of the Bedouin tribes that occupy it; and at this moment it is supposed to be altogether impracticable, owing to the warfare that exists between the tribes. The Arabs who came to us said that they were daily fighting with a neighbouring tribe, and that every night mutual depredations were committed in the two camps. So that, had we not discovered our mistake in time, we should in all probabiiity now be prisoners in some Bedouin encampment in the Haouran!

The night passed tranquilly; neither Arabs nor wolves molested us, although we had counted upon a visit from the latter, and had caused

* Ezekiel, c. xxv, v. 5.

extra precautions to be adopted in the picketting of our horses and mules. The next morning (the 21st) our night guards conducted us for about two hours on our way, but refused to proceed further, as they apprehended getting within the territory of the hostile tribe, by whom they said they would inevitably be murdered. They, however, brought us far enough to be able to point out to our attention a distant Sheikh's tomb in the direction of Sarsa, which lies on the road to Damascus; and its white dome served as as a land-mark to steer our course by.

Our troubles, however, were not yet at an end. One would imagine that the nocturnal miseries of Tiberias and of Jacob's Bridge, the losing our way and wandering into the perilous territory of the Haouran, together with the alarming contingencies of falling into the hands of the Bedouins or into the claws of wolves or hyenas, were in themselves sufficiently exciting incidents of travel to satisfy the most morbid seekers after "les fortes emotions," or the most inordinate amateurs of the romance of Oriental "life on the road," and more than sufficient to keep us properly on the alert. *We* were reasonable enough to be quite satisfied with what had already befallen us; but, that we might

not have it in our power to complain at having been let off too easily, another incident was in reserve to close our chapter of accidents, and one that was very near putting a black seal upon it.

The route to Sarsa is a desperate wilderness of rocky soil, (partly traversed by the remains of a fine old Roman causeway,) composed sometimes of crags, sometimes of great slabs of rock, over which our beasts had the greatest difficulty in keeping their footing. Besides our Bedouin guard and our three Druse muleteers, we have with us two sais's, (or grooms,)—one of them an Egyptian, the other a Maronite Christian; and one or other of these two men was always at the side of my horse or mule to assist me in case of need, although I must say that by far the safest way with the animals of this country, in a very bad road, is to give them their head, and let them pick their own way. Their instinct always leads them, in passages of great difficulty, to pause and look around them for a moment; and when you think that it would be as easy to ride up the side of a house as to be extricated from the horrid pass you are in, you will see the sagacious brutes plant their feet carefully in some little crevice or hollow, so insignificant that it has escaped your notice,

but which is sufficient to steady them, and then, feeling their way step by step, tacking and darning from side to side, they bring you through scatheless. But the road we were traversing became so tremendous, and the mule upon which I was perched *à la Turque* had made such a number of desperate stumbles and slides, that Abou Sekina, the Egyptian sais, at last thought it necessary to go to her head and lead her, more especially as I rode her without either bit or reins. We had scarcely proceeded in this manner five minutes, and had just scrambled through a brook, when, in stepping over a great labyrinth of rock pavement, the four feet of my mule slipped up all at once, and down she fell as if she had been shot. Down I came too from my pile of cushions, where I had nothing to hold by, not even a rein, (maintaining myself merely by balance,) and with such a crash that I was picked up quite insensible.

Judging from the ghastly faces that surrounded me when I came to myself, the whole affair must have worn a very awful aspect. In the confusion and agony of the first moment of returning perception, I really thought that I was dying; and—will you believe it?—the first idea that presented itself to me was that my dead

body would be gobbled up by those two dreadful wolves that we had seen in the Haouran! I was not doomed, however, to such savage obsequies; none of my bones, strange to say, were broken, but my right arm was cut open by the rock upon which I fell, and my left foot was lacerated by a sort of rope stirrup which Mohammed had contrived as a support for me in going down hills. That stirrup saved my life; for when, by the shock of the mule falling, I was thrown out of my seat and fell over to the right, the rope-noose of which it was composed was tightened so violently round my foot by the jerk as to cut through my instep, but at the same time it saved my brains from being dashed out upon the rocks; for as I hung suspended by it, my head barely touched the ground, and all the shock of the fall was received upon my out-stretched arm.

Sick and sore as I was, nothing was left for me but to be lifted once more upon the unlucky mule, and to resume our journey towards Sarsa. No human habitation was near, no human aid within reach. Had my bones been broken, I must have been left there to perish; for Damascus was the nearest place from which assistance could have been obtained, and we were almost

two days' journey from thence! I dwell upon these details, because I think that tourists in general have heretofore made too light of the perils of travelling in this country, and that many lives may be sacrificed to their accidental or intentional carelessness in disguising facts. Syria, in its actual state, is indeed no country for a delicate woman to travel in. All the wealth in the world, all the precautions possible, will not procure for her those auxiliaries to comfort which custom has rendered necessary for her well-being. She must forget that such things as carriages and carriage-roads exist; she must ride all day over execrable roads and under a burning sun; she must sleep at night in a tent, which is either the hottest or the coldest of all shelters; and if fever or accident overtake her on her way, she must trust in God and her own constitution to help her through, for neither physician nor apothecary, nor a roof to shelter her suffering head, will be forthcoming, even should thousands be offered for them. I thought over all this as I lay awake that night, unable from pain to turn in my bed, the wind whistling through my tent, and threatening to tear it from its fastenings; and I determined, that I, at least, would raise my voice to warn others from those

contingencies against which none had warned me. Sympathy indeed is not wanting here, if sympathy alone could alleviate physical suffering; but although it may "minister to a mind diseased," it will not diminish one throb of a fever pulse, or knit together a fractured bone. In my own individual case never did I see such good feeling, such tender care, such thoughtful attention, as were exhibited towards me by every individual accompanying us. Mohammed, in addition to his other talents, proved himself to be an excellent nurse; and even Ismael, the Bedouin guard, the fierce child of the desert, loquacious and noisy like all his race, grew sad and silent, and only opened his lips once to say, that, "if the *sitt* (the lady) did not recover, it would break his heart."

The next day's journey was a painful one; but, thank God, it brought us to Damascus!

Our way lay through a desert-looking plain, which afforded no promise of all that we had read and heard of the surpassing beauty of El Shâm (the Arabic name for Damascus) and its environs. As the city is placed upon a dead level, and as we approached it from the plain, we lost that electrifying view which those who descend to it from the Lebanon enjoy, when

the ravished sight, plunging down from those airy heights into the vast and arid plain below, discovers in the centre of it (to adopt an Eastern figure of speech) a sea of emeralds encircling an island of pearls. But, as we drew nearer to it, some evidences of its extraordinary luxuriance of vegetation became apparent. We saw what appeared to be an immense oasis in the midst of a desert—an ocean of dark verdure on the edge of the horizon; as we approached, waving groves became distinguishable, and gradually we could perceive minarets rising above them, and white domes swelling boldly forth from the clustering shades.

Imagine what a relief for the eye, after traversing that vast sterile plain of the Ghouta under the glare of a scorching sun, to repose upon the magnificent mass of groves, and gardens, and orchards that cover a circumference of thirty miles surrounding the city. The Barrada, divided into two branches, (the Pharphar and Abana of Scripture,) waters those matchless plantations. All the luxury of the East is there,—shade, fragrance, coolness; the sweet murmur of rushing streams; the tender gloom of rustling boughs; the breeze that languidly fans your cheek, laden with the perfume of the orange blossom and the rose!

Well does Damascus merit its Eastern epithet of "Odours of Paradise!" For miles before reaching the city we rode through lanes bordered on each side by low mud walls, over which clustered the embowering branches of fruit and forest trees, intermingled in delicious confusion: at last we entered the gates, and the charm was broken.

An interminable street stretched before us, having a raised rocky causeway in the middle, which sorely tested the footing of our horses and mules; and a row of defaced, crumbling-looking houses of mud-work on either side, with little tumble-down shops of the size and fashion of a cobbler's stall. The sweet odours had vanished, and were replaced by smells which certainly savoured not of Paradise. "Can this be the far-famed Damascus, the queen of Oriental cities?" I said to myself, as more than a mile of this uninviting street was slowly traversed by us, and nothing like a tolerable habitation presented itself to our eyes. Another gate appeared, through which we passed, and lo! it was *not* Damascus, but its *faubourg*, that had disenchanted us.

On emerging from the suburb, we found ourselves in a vast cemetery, which separates it from the city. It was Thursday, the eve of the Ma-

hometan sabbath; and, in conformity with the touching custom of the East, which leads the living habitually to visit on the evening of that day the graves of those they loved and have lost, to adorn them with fresh flowers, and to sit there for hours, as though in communication with the mouldering tenants of the tomb, the vast burying-ground was full of people, almost all women. This city of the dead is thickly populated, yet every tomb had its visitor. Many of these tombs are painted of a pale rose colour, and all are furnished at the foot with a receptacle for flowers or green branches, which are renewed each time that the grave is visited by some tender and mourning woman. As we rode slowly through the cemetery, the visitors were beginning to depart. The whole scene forcibly reminded me of the *scène des nonnes* in "Robert le Diable:" the women, enveloped in their sepulchral-looking garments, (a lárge white cotton sheet, which covers them from head to foot,) as they rose from their seats at the head-stones of the tombs, and glided away, looked exactly like the nuns in their winding-sheets, rising from their graves to keep their ghostly midnight revels in the convent cemetery. Nothing but the moon was wanting to render the illusion complete; but even

gilded by the rays of the setting sun, the scene looked sufficiently unearthly and fantastic to satisfy the most inveterately romantic appetite.

And now we entered the city. But its charm lies not upon the surface; the far-famed magnificence of Damascus is, like the beauty of Eastern women, all hidden from the public gaze under a most ungainly outward envelope. None of the striking Arabian architecture, that renders the streets of Cairo so picturesque, is to be seen here; narrow lanes bordered with mud-built tenements, the façades of which might be mistaken for dead walls, meet your eye, and disappoint your expectations: but at last you dismount at some mean-looking little door in one of these walls; you find yourself in a small paved court surrounded by domestic offices; the porter ushers you through it into a large one, and there the luxury of Damascus bursts upon you in its unrivalled perfection, and fascinates your senses with the grateful coolness of shaded marble courts, the splashing of fountains, the perfume of flowers, and the waving of green boughs.

Thus it was with us. After riding through various streets, all presenting the same monotonous drab-coloured physiognomy, we alighted at a sort of hole-in-the-wall door, which forms

the entrance to an European hotel, lately established by an Italian, and called L'Hôtel de Palmyre; and, passing through the first court, found ourselves in a quadrangle that recalled to our memory one of the garden *Patios* of the Alhambra—a spacious court of tesselated marble, open to the sky, having in the centre a large tank of water full of gold and silver fish, from which ascend the sparkling jets of a fountain,—orange and lemon trees of a size unknown in the West, loaded with blossoms and casting their odoriferous shade between the sunshine and the pavement,—vases of Arabian jessamine, of carnations and damask roses, placed round the tank, and mingling their sweet breath with the scent of the orange flowers; and at the upper end of the court, and raised considerably above the level of the pavement, a large open recess, the walls and ceiling of which are adorned with an elaborate profusion of marble mosaics, costly carvings in wood richly gilt, illuminated Arabic characters, &c., and containing a long low sofa furnished with cushions running the whole length of the recess. Sleeping-chambers open from the three other sides of the court, and the one occupied by me has again recalled to my mind the beauties of the

Alhambra. The panels and lofty ceiling are of some dark precious wood, curiously carved and adorned with painting and gilding, and in the lower part of the chamber are two of those exquisite arched niches of marble, sculptured in the richest stalactites, the Oriental slipper-niches which I had admired in the Moorish palaces of Spain, but which are here used to hold vases of cut flowers. These sleeping-chambers are only lighted from the court, and the lofty windows are chequered and obscured by the rustling branches of orange-trees ; but thus dark and cool, they are delicious night retreats in the sunny climate of Syria ; and so intense was my enjoyment of such a room and such a bed as I found here, after all that I had suffered on the road, that I did not quit either for four and twenty hours.

Damascus is perhaps the most purely Oriental of all the cities of the East, and there is no doubt that it possesses the most fanatical Moslem population that is to be found in the dominion of Islamism. Until within the last few years no Christian wearing the European dress could appear in the streets with safety ; and even *now*, that such a barbarous state of society has given place to better things, precautions must be taken by Europeans to avoid

insult, which are not necessary in other Mahometan towns. For instance, if an European woman were to take the arm even of her husband in the streets, she would be pelted and hooted at by the populace; and woe betide the Western Christian who lingers at the door of a mosque to catch a glimpse of the interior, or even slackens his pace in passing before it! his life would surely pay the forfeit of such imprudent curiosity. I think, though, that, if I had been quite myself I should have endeavoured, under the disguise of the dress of the country, to have penetrated one of the sanctuaries of Islamism here, as I did at Cairo; but, helpless as I have been rendered by my accident on the road, with my right arm in a sling, and limping upon one foot, I have not had courage to make the attempt; indeed, it is only after a week's repose here that I have to-day, for the first time, been able to bend my elbow, or to use my arm at all. How thankful I ought to be, how thankful I am to God, for having so mercifully preserved me from worse sufferings!

We brought letters of introduction to Mr. Wood, the English consul at Damascus, from his sister at Beyrout; but he had departed for Europe a few days before our arrival. He has,

however, been most efficiently represented by Mr. Timoni, the *cancelliere* of the consulate, who has shewn himself the kindest and ablest of *ciceroni*, and under his auspices we have seen all that Christians are permitted to see in Damascus. El Shâm is not in the Holy Land, but there are sites in it connected with the Holy Writings which are always visited by travellers. Of these the principal are the spot where the conversion of St. Paul took place, about ten minutes' distance from the eastern gate of the city; a cellar, said to have been the abode of Judas, in which Ananias restored the sight of St. Paul; and two places, both disputed, and both laid claim to, as being the identical spot from whence the Apostle was lowered down the wall in a basket when he escaped from the Jews, who were keeping watch at the gate to kill him. One of these places is close by an old gate, now walled up; the other is in a remoter part of the town wall, but one more likely for such a feat to have been undertaken with success; for, if the above-mentioned old gate occupies the site of the city gate of St. Paul's time, it is to be presumed that it would have been furnished with a guard-house, and consequently must have been an unlikely place for a secret

evasion to be effected. These sites are pointed out by the Franciscan friars of the Latin convent; but the Damascenes themselves lay claim to Scriptural associations for their city of a far higher antiquity, and one so remote that it would be impossible to surpass it. They affirm that it is the most ancient of all the cities of the earth, that it is built upon the spot where Cain killed Abel, and that the extraordinary fertility of the soil is attributable to its having been moistened with the righteous blood of the first man who ever died.

If Cairo recalls the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments" to one's memory, Damascus realizes all the Oriental day-dreams that have ever been conjured up by a heated imagination after perusing that fascinating book; the houses, the people, the costumes, above all the bazaars, (which are the finest in the East after those of Constantinople,) are so thoroughly free from any admixture of Western fashions or ideas! The bazaars are spacious, well lighted, well ventilated, clean, and fragrant with the mingled smells of damask roses, (sold there in profusion,) latakeea, and the aromatic odours emanating from the numerous spice and perfumery shops. The veiled women gliding about, the turbaned men seated upon

their carpetted shop-boards, dreamily running their fingers over the beads of their Mecca chaplets, or inhaling the cold fragrance of their bubbling narghiles; the sweetmeat vendors, hawking about their trays of tempting goods, in the shape of rose-leaf tarts, preserved *mish mishes* (apricots), lumps of delight, consolation to the throat, and a dozen varieties of *halva*, (*bon bons*,) all equally good; the ice-sellers, with little pails of frozen cream, and large water jars with a lump of snow from Lebanon closing the spout,—all these, mixed up with wild-looking dervishes and still wilder-looking Bedouins from the neighbouring country of the Haouran, form a *tout ensemble* which has not its parallel in any other place. The far-famed blades of Damascus are no longer manufactured here, and are even rarely to be found in the bazaars; but its saddlery is still famous, and it is celebrated for its gold and silver tissues, and the striped silk and cotton stuffs which form so prominent a part in the costume of the Caireens, as well as of the inhabitants of Syria. Unset precious stones are also found here in plenty, especially pearls and turquoises; and every sort of gold and silver trimming is to be had better and cheaper in Damascus than in any other place in the East.

I am never weary of rambling through the bazaars, and have found the shops of the silk-mercers very tempting lounges. The shop-keepers here, however, very kindly spare you the fatigue of going to their warehouses in quest of pretty things, for the moment they are apprised of a traveller's arrival, they hasten to the European hotel, followed by their servants, laden with packages of their best merchandize, which they open out, spread over all the sofas and cushions, and insist upon leaving that you may judge of the effect they produce by candle-light. There has been such a concourse of these men since our arrival, that the great open recess in the court looks like a complete "Vanity Fair;" and I never return to the house, that I do not find five or six silk merchants and their attendants seated upon the marble pavement, leaning on their bales of goods, and looking as patient as if they had nothing in the world to do but to wait my good will and pleasure to toss over their merchandize. You can imagine nothing more picturesque than the appearance of the court at such times; the graceful grouping of these men,—the beautiful Syrian costume in all its Moslem integrity of most orthodox turban and loose silken robes,—the glittering stuffs spread

out to catch every sunbeam that steals through the quivering branches, and the lovely locality, with its fretted arches, its marble incrustations, its splashing fountains, and its fragrant flowers.

And then the chaffering! such chaffering as is only to be found in the East. These merchants always commence by showing their *worst* goods, and asking for them the double of what they intend to take for their *best.* You may on all occasions be sure that there is at the bottom of their bale a little select parcel of superfine articles lying *perdu;* and it is only when you have tossed aside and disparaged all that has previously been spread out before you, that it is produced, and the most preposterous prices put upon its contents. Then the dragoman is summoned to bargain for you, and the affair grows warm!

"When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war!"

On these occasions, Mohammed shines forth in all the lustre of dragomanic pride, and of that rigid probity which is his never-failing characteristic. He opens out and throws aside piece after piece of silk with superb disdain; he listens to the prices asked for them with an incredulous smile; then bursts forth an Arab explosion

of indignation, in which the outraging terms "Yahoodi!" (Jew,) and "Kelb!" (dog,) are prodigally applied to the unconscionable dealer. The poor man shrinks into half of his natural dimensions, and expostulates; Mohammed, as if he did not even hear him, turns round to me, and asks me to point out the articles I wish to purchase; I do so, and he then gathers them into a heap and offers a price for them. The dealer refuses it, and recommences his deprecatory dialogue; but Mohammed, thrusting all the things back into the bundle, flings it into the middle of the pavement, takes their owner by the shoulders and pushes him after it, and then, recommending me to retire into my own chamber, disappears himself. In about a quarter of an hour he knocks at the door of my room with a parcel in his hand; the affair is terminated, he has got the articles for something less than he himself first offered for them.

Damascus is equally celebrated for the beauty of its women and the beauty of its houses; and I have fortunately been enabled to judge in both particulars how far report agrees with fact, having been introduced to a sight of the acknowledged paragons of the place, both animate and inanimate. I shall, of course, give precedence

to the fair creatures of clay, although, if the truth must be told, they did not strike me to be of such excelling and surpassing loveliness in their kind as the more enduring tenements of marble and stucco (which have no rivals in any part of the world).

The two belles of Damascus are a Jewess and a Syrian Christian: the former, the beautiful Esther, is by birth and by marriage allied to the greatest Jewish families in the place; the latter is the wife of the Austrian consul, who, fortunate man! possesses also one of the most exquisite houses in the city. Esther has been unfortunate in marriage, her husband being occasionally deranged in his intellects, and otherwise so disagreeable to her, that she has for some time been endeavouring to procure a divorce, but as yet without effect, although it is said that she has already made her decision as to the successor that is to supplant the poor crack-brained "present incumbent." Our consul, who has been repeatedly solicited to promote her views, has wisely forborne to interfere in so delicate a business; but when Lord S. was at Damascus, he was so charmed by the beauty of Esther, and so touched by her unhappiness, that he promised to bring her case before the House of Lords

on his return to England, and to get an act of Parliament made that would liberate her from her hated ties. The promise, however, has never yet been performed, although more than two years have elapsed since it was made; but Esther's confidence in the good faith of her English friend remains unshaken, and she asked me with great *naïveté* if I knew Lord S., and if the act of Parliament was in progress!

"Hope deferred," if it has sickened her heart, has not "sicklied o'er her cheek with the pale cast of *grief*," for I never saw a less sentimental or less sorrowful-looking countenance than the fair Esther's. It does not possess the aquiline beauty or the lofty character of the Jewish lineaments. A round, plump face, with pretty little child-like features, and a pair of splendid large black eyes, constitute her greatest charm; but, oh! the gilding of refined gold, the painting of the lily with which Eastern women ever mar Nature's handywork! Esther, not satisfied with the length, and breadth, and blackness of her glorious orbs, has surrounded them with such a preposterous border of kollyrium, and lengthened them out to such a degree at the corners, and surmounted them with so fierce and hard-drawn a pair of arches, shaped by the tweezers,

and aggravated by art into ebon of the deepest dye, that she looks like—not one of Madame Tussaud's creations, for they really *do* imitate nature—but one of those unnatural-looking wax busts, with impossible eyes and eyebrows, which are to be seen in every hair-dresser's shop window in Europe.

She was dressed in a pale green embroidered satin *shintyani* and *yellak*, with a quantity of pearls round her throat and wrists; and warm as the weather is, she wore over all a purple cloth *anteree*, trimmed with fur. Her *coeffure*, unlike the Jewesses of Jerusalem, was composed of the Turkish fez and handkerchief, with some diamond ornaments in it, and a sort of veil or strip of muslin depending from the back. We were received by Esther and her mother with great courtesy; they several times touched my hand and then their own foreheads, and led me into the state-apartment, where I was deposited in the ceremonious corner of the divan, and regaled with the most delicious sweetmeats and sherbet. Her father and brother soon afterwards joined us, but the obnoxious husband remained invisible, and no direct allusion whatever was made to him. The house is splendid; it is one of the most beautifully decorated in Damascus; and

you can imagine nothing more luxurious than the boudoir of Esther, the walls and ceiling of which are composed of dark wood, exquisitely carved and relieved with gilding, and encrusted all over with lozenges of Venetian mirror, which produces the most resplendent and rococo effect. It is lined with a divan of Aleppo gold stuff; and at the lower end is a beautiful fountain of marble mosaic, and two of those lovely arched Saracenic niches, fretted by the fingers of the fairies into stalactites and madrepores, and containing silver mounted narghiles and crystal sherbet cups. These objects comprise all the luxury of Damascus furniture: fine matting spread over the marble pavement in summer, Smyrna or Persian carpets in winter, and nothing more is required.

The Austrian *consulessa* received us in her beautiful open court, mounted upon a pair of inlaid pattens a foot and a half high. She is a fine-looking creature, with much sweetness of countenance, fair for this part of the world, but of a sallow, sodden fairness, with soft grey eyes and light brown hair. She would be handsome if it were not for her teeth, which are naturally of a bad colour, and are much neglected. Nothing remarkable in her dress; some natural flowers

were fastened at the side of her *tarboosh*, and a great many rows of pearls encircled her throat and arms. She told me that she would give the world to dress in the European fashion, and fell into ecstacies with my straw bonnet and the jet buttons of my black dress.

These, then, are the two beauties, *par excellence*, of a city famous for the beauty of its women ! and yet I do not exaggerate in averring that any moderate-sized ball-room in London or Paris would exhibit at least twenty far lovelier faces. As to forms, I dare not venture to proffer a similar declaration, for it is impossible to ascertain what the figure of an Eastern woman really is. The Oriental garb is so contrived as to disguise the beautiful outline of shoulders, bust, and waist, which are such peculiarly feminine distinctions; and it is generally so ill-fitted to the person, that, even should a woman's figure be faultless, all the merits of such perfection would be lost under the huddled effect of garments which look as if they had been bought at a ready made clothes shop, without ever having been tried on. All that you can precisely ascertain about an Eastern woman's form is, whether or not she has pretty hands and arms and small feet, whether she is tall or short, slender or fat.

The latter is almost always the case before that time of life has been attained which with us is termed "middle age." The frequent use, or rather abuse of vapour-baths, the absence of all restraint or support to the form, the relaxing effects of the climate, and above all the sedentary habits of the hareem, cause the women of the East, very soon after they become matrons, to fall into masses of certainly *not* "too solid flesh;" and I have frequently seen a young and lovely face surmounting such a figure as in Europe could only belong to the wrong side of fifty. Upon the whole, Oriental beauty is very much overrated; the mysterious veil, which lends a charm to what it conceals, and only allows the most irreproachable part of an Eastern woman's face—her eyes—to be seen, excites the imagination, and awakens the poetical faculties of male travellers, and hence the highly-coloured *fancy pictures* that are got up of the Gulnares, the Leilas, the Fatmés, &c., &c., who figure in the pages of some of our Western wanderers, and are of a description to make the fairest reality appear pale and unlovely in comparison. In all my own personal experience, I never saw but two Oriental women who were thoroughly handsome; and of these, one of them had a figure

which can only be described by Theodore Hook's simile of "a fillet of veal upon castors!"

But to return to the fair *consulessa:* her house—her palace I should say—is the *beau idéal* of Arabian luxury. I could have fancied myself in one of the Moorish palaces of Spain, in the days of Boabdil and Aixa, so identical is the architecture and adornment of these Damascus houses with the Arab monuments of Andalusia. The disposition of all of them is the same: there is the beautiful garden court, with its tank, and fountain, and trees; and there is the great open alcove, with its fretted roof and its long divan, where the inmates always assemble in summer; and on one side of the alcove, with windows looking upon the court, is the great saloon, where all the splendour, and *recherche*, and costliness of Syrian taste are lavished. The walls are adorned with incrustations of the rarest marbles and agates, with elegant arabesques, with illuminated sentences from the Koran or from the moral poets of the East, with precious wood-work sculptured into delicate devices. The ceilings are moulded into Saracenic domes, embellished with all the beautiful intricacies of the stalactite and the honeycomb style of ornament. The windows are of rich stained glass; the pavements

of tesselated marble; the fountains of alabaster or of mosaic work; the niches are enriched within with pendent clusters of gilded stalactites. In these gorgeous halls, the raised upper end of which contains the divan, the lower end the fountain, nothing but cushions and carpets are placed; but such is the splendour of their decoration, that they appear to require nothing else.

The house occupied by the English consul is second only in magnificence to the palace built by the famous Assaad Pasha. The decoration of the walls of the drawing-room alone cost four thousand pounds; and the exquisite beauty of the court, with its numerous fountains and abounding shades, realizes all that poets have dreamed and written of Oriental luxury. In such a delicious retreat I can understand not only the existence of *kief*, but the absorbing enjoyment of it. *Kief* is the Mussulman's earthly Paradise: it is a state of supineness which surpasses the Italian *dolce far niente:* it is a sort of dreamy beatitude, which plunges the body and the mind both into profound inertness, and leaves the senses alone alive to the enjoyment of reclining by the margin of a clear fountain beneath the quivering shade of luxuriant trees, listening to the rushing of waters, mingled with the liquid

notes of nightingales, and inhaling the cold fragrance of latakeea smoked through rose water.

I was even more struck by the residence of Mr. Graham, than by that of Mr. Wood. The Rev. Mr. Graham is one of the Missionaries sent by the Presbyterian Church to the East for the conversion of the Jews, and has been settled at Damascus about three years. But conversion does not progress more rapidly at Damascus than at Jerusalem; one Jew alone has abjured his faith during that period, and even he was in a short time bribed by the rich Jews of the city to forsake his new convictions, to deny Christ and to return to Judaism! Mr. Graham told me that the strongest opposition the Mission met with here has been from the Latin monks of the Franciscan convent, who went so far as to endeavour to prevent the people of Damascus from letting their houses to the Protestant ministers. They failed, however, in their unworthy intrigue, and Mr. and Mrs. Graham are located in one of the finest houses in the city, for which they pay forty pounds a year. The principal saloon is as spacious and lofty as a church; and the fine stained glass windows mingle the reflexion of their gorgeous iris tints with the shades of many-coloured marbles upon its walls. The taste of

Mrs. Graham has imparted an air of comfort to this vast apartment, that in no degree militates against its national characteristics. Besides the never-failing Eastern divans and cushions, there are European writing-tables and work-tables: the arched niches are filled with books; and in the principal one, which resembles a grotto of golden petrifactions, is placed a small finger organ. The instrument and its recess look worthy of a St. Cecilia; and if report speaks true, the fair Saint has found an able representative in Mrs. Graham, whose voice and finger in the performance of sacred music might have been envied even by the noble Roman martyr herself. I spent last evening at their house, but so many strangers dropped in, and there was so much conversation, that music was out of the question, and I was obliged to take my leave without the gratification I had anticipated in listening to the sweet voice of my fair young countrywoman.

One of the greatest boasts, as well as the greatest delights of the Damascenes, consists in their coffee-houses. Not that these famous resorts possess any of the magnificence that is the attribute of their private houses, for they are literally nothing more than large open sheds; but they unite all the conditions requisite to con-

stitute enjoyment in this climate, shade, coolness, and fragrance. We visited the most celebrated of them, just outside of the town, in the most enchanting position that can be imagined, almost insulated by the Barrada, which there forms five or six cascades, and branches off into various channels that supply the city with water. In the midst of these tumbling and foaming falls is a plat of verdure shaded by magnificent trees; and there, fanned by the cool breeze, lulled by the murmur of rushing waters, soothed into a beatified stillness by the fumes of their narghiles, and only occasionally rousing themselves to sip tiny cups of coffee, the Turks and Syrians dream away hours in this charming spot—the very *chef-lieu* of *Kiefdom!* At night it is lighted up by a few lamps, suspended like so many little moons among the branches of the trees,—just sufficient to cast a soft and subdued radiance over the scene, and not enough to offend the eyes by a garish glare. Verily these Damascenes are adepts in luxury!

My first question on arriving at Damascus was for the tomb of Salah e' Deen, who died and was buried in this city: but the grave of Cœur de Lion's chivalrous adversary is now nowhere to be found; and while Malek Adhel sleeps

alone in his glory, in all the pomp of Eastern sepulture, beneath the swelling domes of his desert tomb at Cairo, the dust of his gallant brother lies forgotten in some obscure corner of his once proud capital, or, worse still, has perhaps been scattered to the winds. By way of compensation, I suppose, I was taken to see some splendid remains of antiquity, which are inclosed in one of the bazaars in the vicinity of the principal mosque. They consist of several beautiful Corinthian columns, and the fragment of an arch, evidently of Roman workmanship, and are quite equal to anything of the sort at Rome. But they are so choked up with buildings, being in the heart of one of the most populous bazaars, that no satisfactory view of them is to be obtained, and they are only to be perceived at all by ascending to the roofs of some of the adjoining houses.

Among the monuments of Damascus, the khan of Assaad Pasha, all modern as it is, (dating only from the last eighty years,) must not be forgotten. It is the finest construction of the kind in the East, and completely throws into the shade the great khan for the merchants of India and Persia at Constantinople. It is entered by a lofty arched gateway from

one of the bazaars, and always arrests the attention of the stranger passing by, from its magnificent proportions and purely Oriental taste. Like many of the mosques and public buildings of Cairo, the khan of Assaad Pasha is constructed of alternate layers of black and white stone or marble, forming broad horizontal bands completely destructive of repose to the eye. In the centre of a large circular building is an enormous fountain, where a whole herd of camels might be watered; and round the upper part of the interior runs a series of galleries, where foreign merchants deposit their merchandize and are themselves lodged. It is also used as a sort of Stock Exchange by the merchants of Damascus; and I never passed by, that I did not see some striking group within, converting that beautiful interior into a most attractive *tableau vivant.*

In Damascus, as well as in every other part of Syria and Palestine which we have visited, the Egyptian domination is warmly and undisguisedly regretted by the natives, Christian, Jew, and Moslem, indiscriminately. I know that the policy of England leads her to support the Turkish supremacy, and to uphold in the restoration of Syria to the Porte the integrity of the Ottoman empire; and, although I can fully enter

into the expediency of not suffering a dismemberment of the dominions of our old ally the Sultan, and rejoice that he should have been reinstated in his Syrian possessions, I cannot close my eyes to the fact, that the yoke of Egypt was far less burthensome than that of Turkey to the natives of this country; and that to the enlightened views and energetic conduct of Ibrahim Pasha, European travellers are indebted for the safety with which they may now circulate through the land, and Christians may attribute the respect with which they are actually treated even here, in the hot-bed of Moslem fanaticism. On this subject I have never heard two opinions expressed; the one unvarying regret, the one uncompromising wish uttered by all sects and all stations, from one end of Syria to the other, is that Ibrahim Pasha were here once more!

It is to be hoped that the Turkish government will profit by the example of religious toleration and liberal feeling exhibited by the Egyptian prince; yet there is more cause for fear than for hope. Public expectation has been almost painfully excited of late upon the question of the nomination to the vacant Pashalik of Damascus, which is the most important one in Syria, and comprises within its jurisdiction Je-

rusalem and the holy sites of Terra Santa. Since we have been here the affair has been decided, and the Damascenes have been apprized of the speedy advent of their new governor, Safetty Pasha. But alas! the Sultan's nomination bodes no good to the cause of Christianity in this land; the man who has been appointed to this important post is a genuine Turk of the old school, a cordial hater of reform in every shape, and perhaps the most intolerant and fanatic Mussulman in the whole Turkish empire. Safetty Pasha is the identical individual, who, during his ministerial tenure at Constantinople, caused the death of a young Armenian who had embraced Mahometanism in order that he might marry a Turkish woman, but subsequently was seized with remorse, and became a Christian again. The strongest efforts were made by the Christian ambassadors at Constantinople to save the life of this young man, but in vain; the actual Pasha of Damascus not only caused him to be put to death, but added to that severity the insult of ordering his severed head to be placed between his legs decorated with a European round hat, and thus it was exposed in the streets of Constantinople for three days!

It is to be hoped, and it may also be confidently expected, from the great ability and judgment evinced by our consul, Mr. Wood, during his residence here, that he will prove as successful in counteracting the fanatical tendencies of Safetty Pasha, as he has already been in *humanizing* the Moslems of Damascus, and in maintaining, and even strengthening, the semblance (I fear I must not say the *spirit*) of toleration which was first enforced upon them by Ibrahim Pasha. Mr. Wood's perfect knowledge of Oriental languages, and his intimate acquaintance with Oriental manners and customs, render him peculiarly fitted for so difficult a task; and it were to be wished that all the great consulates in the East were similarly bestowed upon men whose educations, acquirements, and pursuits have rendered them more apt to comprehend the characteristics, and obtain the sympathies of the people among whom they are thrown, than it is possible for either the pupils of our foreign office, or men who have passed the greater part of their lives in other professions, to be.

The most desirable acquirement to be possessed by our consuls, and above all by our consuls-general in the East, is precisely the one that generally appears to be overlooked in their

nomination, namely, a knowledge of the Turkish and Arabic tongues. They would then be rendered independent of the services of interpreters, and would know that their instructions were not liable to be garbled, as they doubtless often are, by Eastern dragomans. Turkish pride causes a man in power to shrink from the bare idea of being either admonished or differed with in opinion through the medium of an inferior, and he will shut up in sullen silence rather than submit to such a degradation; while the interpreters in their turn would not dare to give full force to any unpleasant truths they might be directed to convey to a high official. Thus an important political question may be completely neutralized by the organ through which it is obliged to be transmitted; whereas, when a consul can be his own spokesman, he has nothing to apprehend from such contingencies.

Mr. Wood perfectly comprehends this, as well as the policy of making for himself and the country he represents, a party among the powerful Mahometans. I am told that he has not hesitated to sacrifice the whole of his leisure, without reserve, to the furtherance of English interests and English policy in the East, through the medium of English hospitality; that the

greater portion of every day is taken up in receiving the visits of the Turkish authorities, civil and military, (Oriental visits are interminable and not very lively affairs !) with each of whom coffee and pipes are unfailingly discussed; and that he not only suffers these Moslems to "bestow their tediousness" upon him in this shape whenever they please, but that he exercises an hospitality towards them which has rarely been exhibited by our consuls in the East. The excellent dinners and sparkling champagne of the English consulate at Damascus have done wonders towards softening Mahometan prejudices; and although Mr. Wood has often the mortification of seeing his uncivilized Turkish guests prostrate under the table before the soup has been removed, he has also the satisfaction of beholding the European garb respected by the whole population of the place, and the hated round hat circulate through the bazaars and most crowded parts of the city, with as much safety to its wearer as though it were the greasiest felt cap of Dervish fanaticism, or the most orthodox green turban of Islamism that was ever wound round the brows of the descendants of the Prophet.

But now my pleasant sojourn at Damascus

draws to a close, and with regret I remember, that at this hour to-morrow I shall be many miles away from it,—never again, in all human probability, to behold this pearl of Oriental cities. Many circumstances have conspired to render our stay here delightful, and not the least among them has been the unexpected arrival of some of the most agreeable of our travelling acquaintance, almost in the same moment with ourselves, —some coming from the ruins of Jerash, some from Cairo, others from Jerusalem. To-morrow we all disperse in the various directions of Palmyra, Aleppo, Egypt by the desert, and Baalbec, (which latter is our destination.) God knows whether we ever shall meet again; but if not, and that these pages should ever reach their eyes, they will learn, that among those gracious incidents which have contributed to enhance the pleasures of a tour where there has been so much to enjoy, and so little to regret, few have been more truly appreciated by me, than these pleasant snatches of social intercourse with kindred and courteous spirits, which have recurred in the far solitudes of the Nile, in the bustle of Cairo, amid the pilgrim scenes of Jerusalem, and in the garden courts of Damascus!

CHAPTER XIV.

A LAST LOOK. — ANTI-LEBANON. — TOMB OF ABEL. — ZEBDANI. — THE BEKAA. — ARRIVAL AT BAALBEC. — AGREEABLE INCIDENT. — VIGIL. — RUINS OF BAALBEC. — ARCHITECTURE. — BEAUTIFUL FRAGMENT. — TEMPLE OF THE SUN. — SMALL TEMPLE. — MONSTER BLOCK. — OCTAGON TEMPLE. — MOTOUALIS. — THE LEBANON. — RETURN TO BEYROUT. — CONCLUSION.

Beyrout, May 5, 1846.

We reined in our horses on the summit of the hill that overlooks the suburb of Salahiyyeh, and gazed down upon the city we had just left. Then we could form a just estimate of the self-denial attributed to Mahomet, when, from the same point of view, he beheld Damascus, and exclaiming, "There is but one Paradise allowed to man, mine shall not be of this world!" turned his back upon the fair scene, and courageously rode away. Pity it is that so pretty a trait should be nothing more than pure fiction; but the truth is, that Mahomet never was within ken of Damascus; the city was not taken by the followers of the Prophet until two years after his death, when Heraclius was defeated under its

walls by the two Arab generals of his successor; *et voilà comme on écrit l'histoire!* That which is not apocryphal, however, is the extreme beauty of the scene. Imagine the verdure of Richmond beneath the skies of Syria; a forest of groves and orchards, thirty miles in circumference, surrounding the fairest city in the East; and sparkling streams branching from the Barrada, the Golden River of the ancients, watering those abounding plantations, and preserving their almost fabulous freshness; while far around stretches the great arid plain of the Ghouta, bounded in the distance by the mountains of the Haouran and the Anti-Lebanon.

Our way lay across the chain of the latter, and, as we commenced our ascent, the scenery became delightful; at every turn of the road the mountain torrent, fed by the snows above and dancing in the sunbeams, rushed tumultuously through green banks fringed with lovely trees, and cooled the air as it flowed onwards towards the thirsty plain. But the road through the mountain is so abominable, that my delight was considerably tempered by apprehension, and a haunting vision of my recent accident kept me in a perpetual tremor. Our attendants appeared to divine my fears, for, all unbidden, Ismael, the

Bedouin guard, dismounted, and walked at one side of me, grasping my arm, while Abou Sekina held me fast on the other side, and Mohammed led my mule through every difficult pass.

At noon we rode by a place called Nebbi Abel, which tradition has marked out as the tomb of Abel. It is on the summit of a steep hill, overlooking the path along which we wound. The piety of the early Christians consecrated the spot by building a church over it, which is now in ruins; and the Mussulmans hold in equal veneration the place containing the first grave that was ever made. The legends of the land say, that when Cain slew his brother, not knowing how to dispose of the body, he threw it across his shoulders, and carried it for a considerable way, in the hope of finding a hiding-place for it. At last he perceived a raven making a hole in the ground with its beak, in order to inter one of its young, and taking example of the bird, he flung down his burden, hollowed out a grave with his hands, and consigned the clay of Abel to its parent earth.

Owing to the desperate mountain roads we had to traverse, we did not reach the village of Zebdani, where our first night's halt was to be made, until after dark. There was no moon, and

by the dim light of the stars we rode for more than an hour, through shady lanes and plashy brooks, where all the frogs in Syria appeared to be located, our guide assuring us all the time that we were already among the gardens of the village, and yet no sight, no sound of human habitation appearing. We began to think that our unlucky Druse had led us astray a second time; the poor horses and mules, done up by twelve hours' march, were floundering among the little streams with which the whole ground appeared to be intersected, and every moment I expected to be deposited among the croaking multitudes that people them; when, oh joy! a light glimmered in the distance, and the shouts of our men were responded to by answering shouts. In five minutes we rode into a sort of farm-yard, where our tents were to be pitched, and while that operation was in process, I was invited into the house to which it appertains, and quickly surrounded by all its inmates. The greater part of them had already retired to rest in beds dotted about the floor of a large room; but they all got up, and as people in this part of the world lie down for the night with almost all their clothes on, they had nothing to do but to give themselves a shake, and squat down upon their heels in a

semicircle before me. The women brought me a bowl of clotted milk, and filled my lap with green almonds: it was all they had to offer, but they gave it with a hearty hospitality. They were very pressing for me to pass the night under their roof, but I knew all that would inevitably be gained by such a measure, and declined the courtesy.

The next morning we were on the move at sunrise: that day's journey was to be a long one, and we had not a moment to lose. After leaving Zebdani, which is prettily situated amidst shady lanes and running waters, the route became melancholy and monotonous. The descent of Anti-Lebanon into the Bekaa (the long valley, or rather plain, which separates it from the chain of Lebanon) presents a dreary succession of gray barren hills and gloomy gorges, that appeared to lengthen out before us as we advanced. Evening came on, and still we could perceive nothing of Baalbec. We had sent on the baggage-mules and all our men (with the exception of Mohammed, Abou Sekina, and the Bedouin guard) from the place where we dined, in order that we might find our tents pitched and the evening repast prepared by the time we should reach Baalbec; and when the sun went down, and that dark-

ness fell on all around, we consoled ourselves with the idea, as our horses slowly picked their way along, that we should have nothing to do on arriving at the night's halt, but to swallow our tea and get into our beds.

It was nine o'clock when we entered the town of Baalbec, and every body in that primitive little place had gone to rest: silence and obscurity brooded over all, and it was with difficulty that we threaded our way through the narrow lanes, and shaped our course towards the ruins, near to which, and under the shade of some broad-spreading trees, Mohammed had directed that our tents should be pitched.

We reached the spot,—we were beneath "the trysting tree,"—but still the same stillness and darkness prevailed. No vestige of tent, or man, or mule, was to be seen or heard! Our three attendants rent the air with their shouts. "Yussuf!" "Hassan!" "Ahmed!" resounded through the solitude, but no answering shout greeted our anxious ears. It was just possible that the muleteers might have mistaken the spot specified for our encampment, and have pitched the tents in some other direction out of hearing of us: Ismael and Abou Sekina were despatched to make the circuit of the place, while Mohammed

improvised a sort of sofa out of the saddles and saddle-cloths at the foot of one of the trees for me. We were all thoroughly fatigued, but I was sinking from exhaustion, and yet I could not persuade myself to profit by Mohammed's contrivance. I had seen so many snakes during the daytime, that I dared not seat myself in the dark, where it was more than probable that some might be lurking. I dismounted, and leaned against one of the horses for support, while my mule, the moment she got rid of me, lay down and rolled upon the ground, and then commenced nibbling the scanty grass. How I envied the happy brute!

In about twenty minutes the two men returned with the pleasant intelligence that our mules and baggage had never made their appearance at Baalbec. They had ransacked the whole place, roused the inhabitants, and made a general search, but, alas! a fruitless one. It was now evident that either the muleteers had lost their way in the mountains, or that they had turned rogues, robbed us, and decamped with the booty. All of our belongings, without a single exception, were with them; and there we stood, at ten o'clock at night, with nothing but the clothes on our backs, under a tree, in the wilderness

of Baalbec! To pass the night there was out of the question. Mohammed was despatched in quest of shelter for us, and in another half-hour we were housed.

But oh! the horrors of that night! Let us throw a veil over them. When I found that rest was impossible, I groped my way to the door of my room, which opened out upon a terrace, and wrapping my cloak round me, seated myself upon a ricketty stool which I found there, with my back leaning against the wall. I knew that ophthalmia might be the consequence of passing the remainder of the night upon the house-top; but what was the *chance* of that or anything else, to the dreadful *realities* within? The longest night will have an end, however, and so had this. At sun-rise we were greeted by the welcome intelligence that the missing mules had just made their entry into Baalbec, and had taken up their station under the identical trees where they ought to have been the preceding night. The men had lost themselves in the mountains, and finding it impossible to recover their road in the dark, had bivouacked *al fresco*, and come on at early dawn. We found our breakfast-table prepared under the spreading shade; and not a hundred paces

from us, to the left, towered the glorious ruins of Baalbec!

Perhaps the most favourable moment for beholding these ruins is sun-rise, when the earliest beams of the God of Day seem so lovingly to greet the remains of his once proud sanctuary, that column, capital, and colonnade gradually blush into the softest rosy hues as the clinging light spreads over them. To us, at least, our first view of them at that hour appeared so sublime, that we could imagine nothing to surpass it. Monsieur de Lamartine has recorded his first impressions on the same spot in language as forcible as it is happy: "Le silence est le seul langage de l'homme, quand ce qu'il éprouve dépasse la mesure ordinaire de ses impressions." We, however, were not struck dumb by what we beheld; those who have seen Karnak can never again be overwhelmed by any fabric formed by human hands!

Baalbec presents a mass of ruins of which the famous Temple of the Sun constitutes only a part. Three distinct epochs of architecture are evident; the most recent is Saracenic, preceded by Roman, and both are superimposed upon an artificial platform of a period unknown, but surmised to date from the time of Solomon.

This platform contains those marvellous monster-blocks of stone which baffle all conjecture as to how they could have been conveyed thither from the quarry, and still more how they could have been raised to the position they now occupy. They far exceed in magnitude the wonderful masses of Koom Ombos, and are formed of a compact limestone resembling coarse marble, much heavier than the sandstone of Egypt. The natives of this place quickly resolve all doubts, by assuring you that the whole fabric was raised by the command of Solomon, the most powerful enchanter the world ever saw, and executed by the Djins, (Genii,) who were his slaves! This is a summary way of settling all difficulties in such matters, which saves the people of the East a world of trouble and many a hearty headache; while we, hard-brained unbelievers of the West, rejecting those beautiful fables, plunge headlong into a sea of doubt and controversy, dive into the depths of antiquity for some of the precious gems of truth that have for ages lain engulphed beneath its waves, and are often so bewildered by the prodigal confusion of treasure scattered there, as to grasp at cockles instead of pearls, and return to the surface as poor as when we left it.

As far as relates to the probability of Solomon

having been the founder of the original Temple of Baal at Baalbec, it is a fact that part of the outer wall is composed of immense blocks of stone with bevelled edges, exactly cut like those still remaining in that part of the ancient foundation of the Temple at Jerusalem which is supposed to be coëval with the reign of Solomon. The second period of constructions at Baalbec is attributed to the time of the Roman emperor Antoninus Pius, and all of those remains are of the Corinthian order, magnificent in their outline, but betraying in their exuberant ornaments some of those faults of sculpture which marked the decline of the art. Perhaps no fragment that remains of the splendour of the Elder World is, however, so perfectly beautiful as the six lofty columns, (each one measuring between sixty and seventy feet in height, and surmounted by a noble architrave and cornice,) which tower above all the other ruins of Baalbec, and form the first object beheld from afar by the pilgrim approaching those shattered fanes. Egypt possesses nothing more imposing—nothing so harmonious—as these pillars, which, all-colossal as they are, have an airy lightness, an elegant richness of detail about them, that enchants even more than it astonishes. These six columns must

have formed part of a colonnade, judging from the fragments of similar ones that lie shivered around; perhaps it led to the entrance of the great Temple of the Sun, and I can imagine nothing comparable to the effect produced by such an avenue.

The remains of the temple itself are surpassingly beautiful. Its form is an oblong square, and it is surrounded by a majestic covered portico, supported by lofty Corinthian columns surmounted by the most elaborately sculptured architraves and cornices: the soffits are adorned with the busts of gods and heroes in high relief, looking down from lozenge-shaped apertures in a ground of delicately carved trellis-work. Great fragments of these soffits encumber the ground, the effect of earthquakes, which, more than war, have been the destruction of Baalbec; but enough still remains uninjured to show how exquisite must have been the beauty of this noble portico in its original state. We were a long time before we could discover the entrance to the temple, for the Saracens surrounded it with a wall, which appears to have been principally intended to prevent all ingress to it. At last, just as we were about to retire from the spot in despair, believing that it had been



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blocked up for long ages, I espied a low aperture in the wall, half masked with wild brambles, through which I crept, and found myself standing before the great gateway. It is twenty-five feet high, and twenty wide, and is admirably sculptured all round with broad bands of the most delicate ornaments in a wonderful state of preservation, and the interior of the upper part represents an eagle with outspread wings—not the eagle of imperial Rome, but the Eastern eagle dedicated to sun-worship—grasping in its talons a caduceus, and holding in its beak a ribbon, the ends of which, streaming to the right and to the left, are supported by two flying figures of Fame. The soffit containing this beautiful sculpture is composed of three blocks, the centre one of which has been displaced by earthquake, and has fallen several feet below the other two, where it remains suspended, and appears to menace the head of whomsoever attempts to cross the threshold. The roof of the temple has completely disappeared: the interior still preserves some fine pilasters, with niches between them, which were doubtless destined to contain the statues of the gods; and their elaborate embellishment is in perfect harmony with the other portions of this once splendid sanctuary.

A beautiful gem among the Roman remains at Baalbec is the small circular temple of marble supported upon Corinthian columns, (a few of which are yet standing,) and having niches between them for statues, which is detached from the great pile, and up to a recent period was used as a Christian chapel for the Greek rite. It is in a very tottering condition, and we did not attempt to enter; but the exterior is rich in sculptures of great beauty and delicacy. All the written descriptions in the world would, however, fail in conveying a complete idea of the ruins of Baalbec—so grand in their outline, so minute in their details, so saddening in their chaotic destruction: I shall therefore weary you no longer by persevering in so impossible a task, and merely remark in conclusion, that the Saracenic remains would be of paramount interest in any other place; but in the vicinity of that noble temple,

> "Whose lofty columns stand sublime,
> Flinging their shadows from on high,
> Like dials, which the wizard Time
> Had raised to count his ages by,"

the eyes may for a moment wander complacently over the light structures of Arab art, but it will only be for one moment; in the next they will

revert to the magnificent pile where Baal and Helios were once adored, and become rivetted there with an intensity of admiration almost akin to the enthusiasm which led the idolaters of antiquity to prostrate themselves before those gorgeous fanes.

About a mile from Baalbec, in one of the quarries which furnished the materials for the construction of its temples, lies prostrate that wonderful block of stone which has excited as much astonishment, and almost as much admiration, as the ruins themselves. It measures sixty-eight feet in length, seventeen feet eight inches in width, and thirteen feet ten inches in thickness. Neither the pyramids of Ghizeh nor the gigantic monuments of Thebes and Karnak exhibit in their materials anything comparable in magnitude with this block. In what remote period it was hewn from the parent rock, why it never was made use of, and what cause arrested its removal when in a state of completion for the purpose for which it was destined, are mysteries which never now can be elucidated; and perhaps, after all, it is of no very great consequence that the spirit of research should be baffled upon those points. But I confess that my curiosity was roused to know what race of men could have been the ar-

tificers of works so wonderful, and whether the conception of them originated in the capacious mind of the magnificent Solomon, or in the creative energies of that conquering race, who spread the Roman empire over the West and the East, and scattered the enduring monuments of their glory throughout the vanquished kingdoms of the Old World.

Still further on, westward, in the direction that leads to Beyrout, is a little isolated temple, quite distinct in its character from the florid remains of Baalbec, and almost Druidical in its simplicity. It is now roofless, and is of an octagonal form, supported by eight ornamental granite columns without either base or capital, and surmounted by large blocks of stone, (one placed over every two columns,) which sustain a very simple cornice. We at first supposed it might be a tomb, but we could learn nothing conclusive from the guide who accompanied us, except that it is called *Kubbet Duris* by the people of the country, and is believed to be more ancient than the Corinthian remains.

Apropos to these people. The inhabitants of Baalbec and the Bekaa are *Motoualis*, or followers of Ali, that is to say, Mahometans of the Shiite sect, whose tenets are those of the Per-

sians; while the Turks, who assert that they are the only orthodox professors of Islamism, are Sunnites, or followers of Omar. Numbers of these Motoualis are to be found scattered through Syria, and by some are supposed to be unmixed descendants of the ancient Syrians; but perhaps no country in the world exhibits greater varieties of religion and of race than this antique land. The Turks, its actual masters, do not amount to more than two-fifths of its population; the remainder consists of Syrians by descent, Bedouin Arabs, Druses, Motoualis, Maronites, Armenians, Greek Christians, and Jews.

But let me digress no more.

The last temple had now been visited; my pilgrimage was drawing to a close! The holy Lebanon still remained to be traversed in order to reach Beyrout, and I would fain have directed my course towards "the Cedars," before quitting its venerable soil; but the road thither is still impassable from the snow, and until the end of June no traveller attempts to visit those forest Saints. We therefore turned our horses' heads towards the Mediterranean, traversed the lovely valley of the Bekaa, (the ancient Cælo Syria,) and soon found ourselves in the mountains. The passage of the Lebanon from Baalbec to Beyrout offers

none of that romantic beauty of scenery that might be expected from the sublime aspect of the mountain chain, as seen from the sea-shore of Beyrout, or from the plains of Sidon and Tyre. Barren rocks and gloomy gorges, lighted up by a scorching sun,—scarcely any villages, and those of the meanest description, — miserable khans, which we avoided as we would have done "the plagues of Egypt," were all that met our eyes. Our ears, however, were occasionally soothed by the sound of Christian bells from some far off convent; and I can scarcely describe the effect which the sound of the "squilla lontana," so long unheard, produced upon me in these wild solitudes.

After two days and a half journeying through the most terrific roads I ever yet encountered, (*roads* did I say? *rocks* is the word!) we were safely deposited in Beyrout. The thrill of almost wondering thankfulness with which I dismounted at the door of Bianchi's hotel made me suddenly sensible that I had scarcely hoped to have returned thither *alive*. Indeed, to the precautions of our dragoman Mohammed (who walked every step of the way across the Lebanon, in order that he might lead my mule) do I wholly attribute the preservation of my limbs, if not of my life.

In places of such extreme difficulty, that the sagacious animal could scarcely retain her footing, he would hold her up by manual force; and although, in the terrific ups and downs of which the whole passage of the mountain is composed, I was sometimes thrown upon the mule's neck, and sometimes upon her tail, I was never, thanks to his indefatigable care, thrown to the ground.

I have, indeed, more than ordinary cause to be thankful that during a tour involving many perilous chances to my companions as well as to myself, not one of us should have been prostrated by any of those sufferings which the vicissitudes of Eastern travel often entail even upon the strong man. And it is with a feeling of chastened gratitude to the All-merciful Being who watched over us, and not with one of self-exultation at having overcome difficulties from which sterner natures might have shrunk, that I now look back upon my recent wanderings through scenes so varied and so sacred in their interest that the rest of the world contains nothing comparable to them, and rejoice that I have been permitted to see what I have seen, and to lay up for myself such treasures of thought—I dare not say of wisdom—as must be the result of time so employed, and as will prove a source of unalloyed satisfac-

tion to me to the latest moment of my existence.

If I have only succeeded in imparting to you a tithe of the interest which I have myself experienced, my gratification will not be quite so selfish as the foregoing sentence would infer; and I shall doff my pilgrim weeds, and hang up my pilgrim's staff, with the gracious reflection, that my wanderings have not been made in vain.

But I am hopeless of such a result—for it is an undeniable truth, (and lay it to your minds, O ye dwellers at home! who only become acquainted with the varieties of your fellow-man through the medium of books,) that, be the pages you pore over ever so eloquent, or the reflections they contain ever so arousing, "*il y a plus de philosophie dans cent lieux de caravane, que dans dix ans de lectures et de méditations.*"

FINIS.

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